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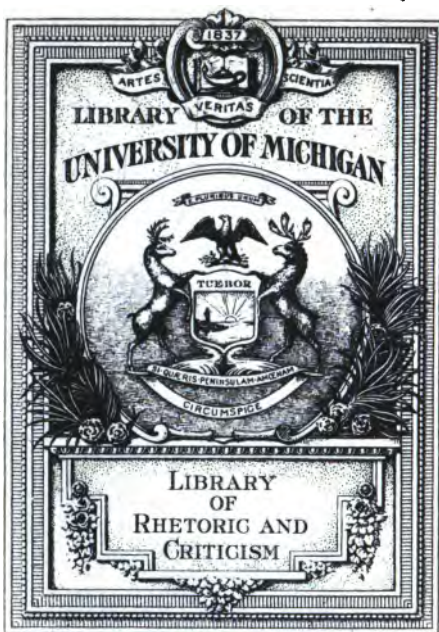
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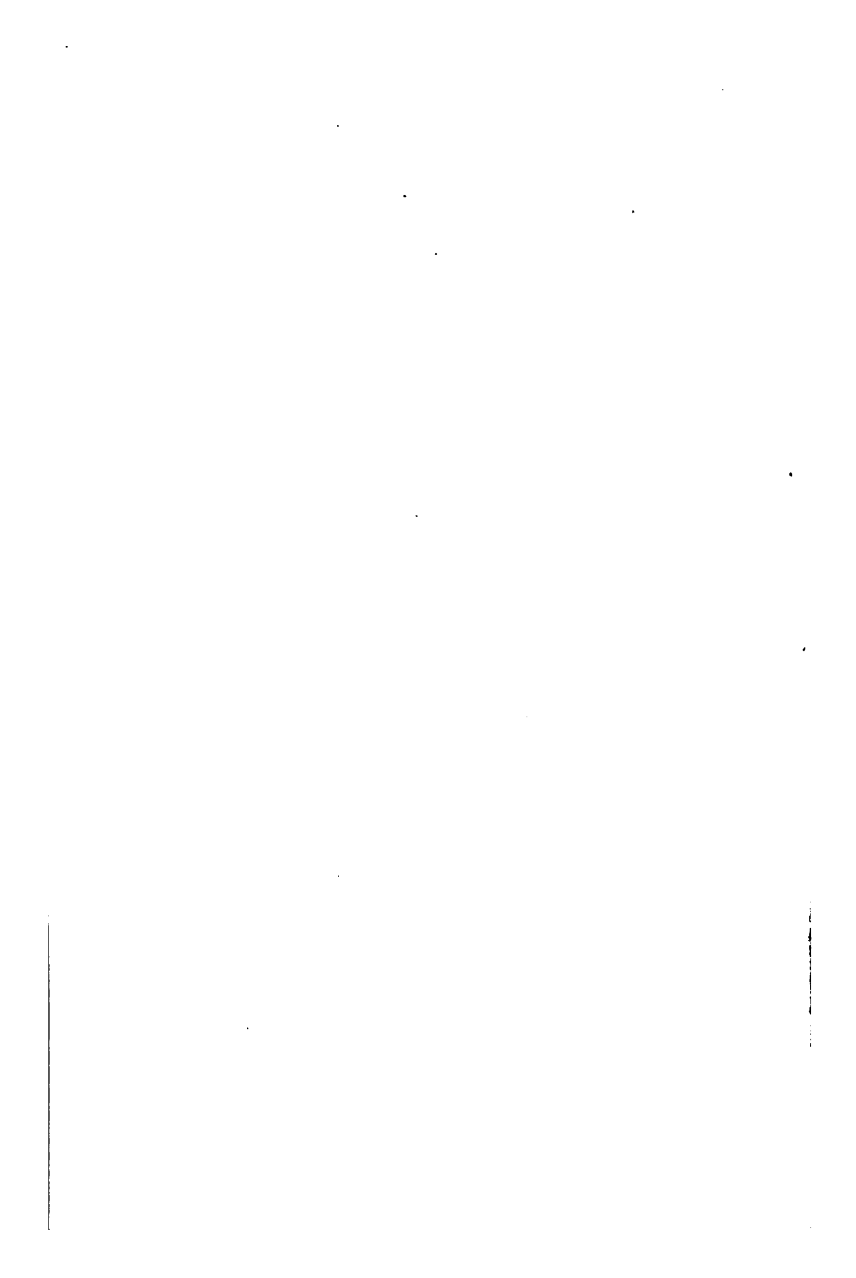
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# THE ELEMENTARY LAWS OF ADVERTISING

*And How to Use Them*

BY  
*Henry S. Bunting*  
HENRY S. BUNTING

AUTHOR OF "THE PREMIUM SYSTEM OF FORCING SALES: ITS PRINCIPLES,  
LAWS AND USES"; "SPECIALTY ADVERTISING—THE  
NEW WAY TO BUILD BUSINESS," ETC.

*From The Novelty News Laboratory of Business Economics*



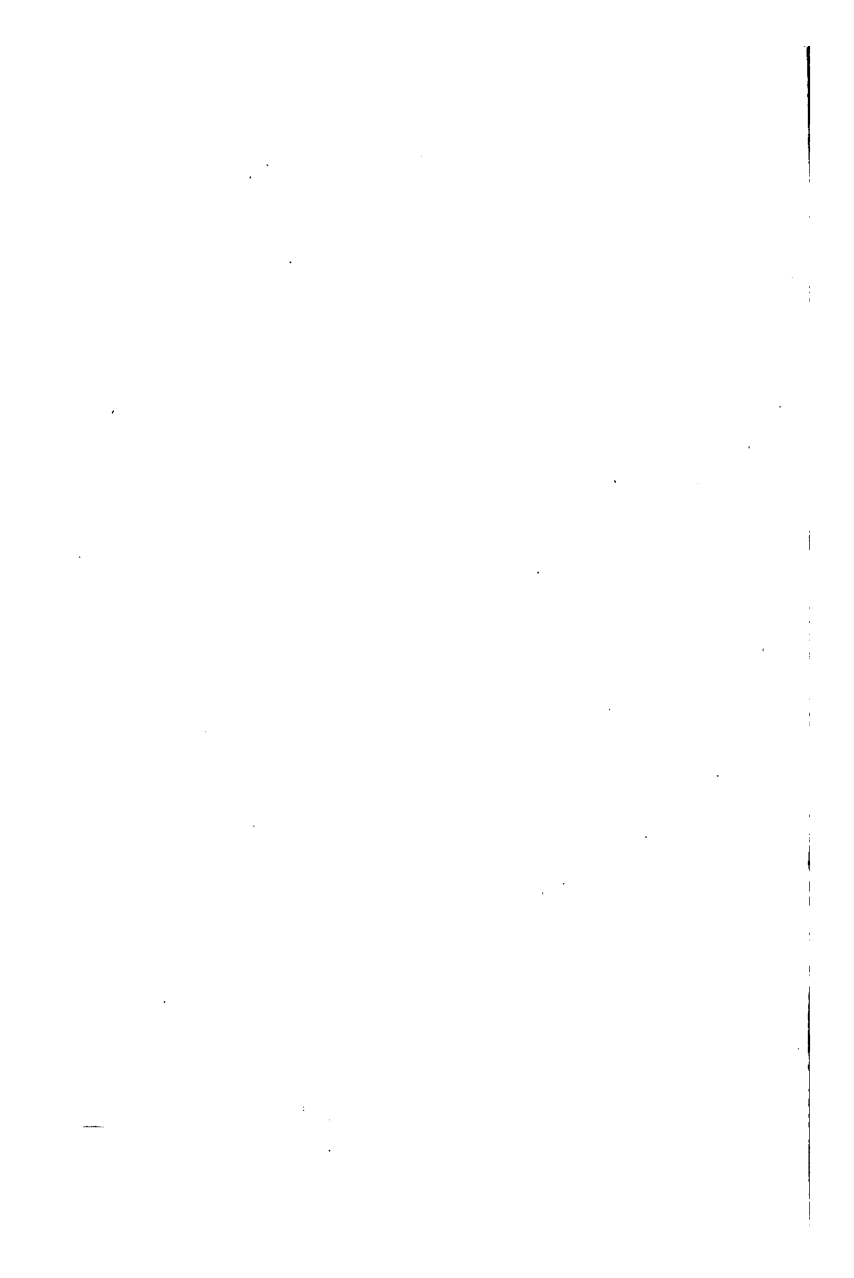
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TO THE MAN WHO PAYS THE BILLS  
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED



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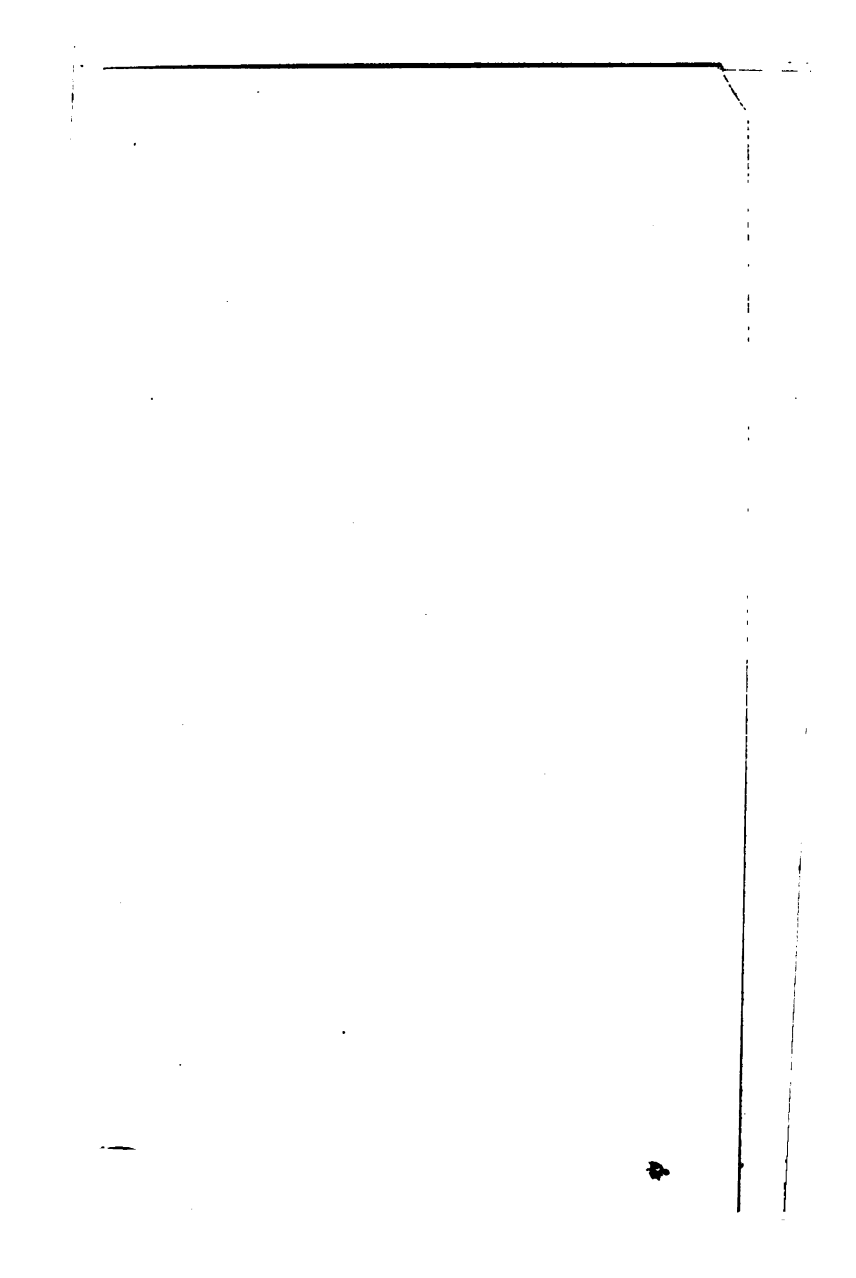
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## *Chapter I*

### THE BUSINESS MAN AS A THINKER

The business man who spends large or small sums of money for publicity is, as a general rule, convinced that his publicity brings him trade. If he were not so convinced, he would cease to advertise; or if he continued to advertise in spite of a conviction that he was throwing his money away, it would only be because he was afraid to quit — like the little boy who runs on thin ice.

I can heartily sympathize with the advertising business man in every one of his doubts and perplexities, for the simple reason that I am an advertising business man myself; and for many years have been perplexed by the selfsame situations, and the selfsame doubts, that perplex my fellow business men in all matters pertaining to publicity.

A few years ago I decided to take up the serious study of publicity with a view to finding out, if possible, the bed-rock facts at the bottom of the advertising game. Naturally I turned to the work that had been done by others before me, and I was sorry to discover that almost all this work was from the hands of men who were lacking in one of the two qualifications essential to a successful investiga-

tion of the facts. They were men who had no knowledge of science whatever, or they were men who had no knowledge of business. Much of the work had been done by men who were professional advertising *agents* — for the most part high livers, whose incomes depended upon the commissions they received for writing and placing publicity, and who were more deeply concerned in getting their commissions than in the getting of trade for their clients. Needless to say that the great majority of these men had little or no knowledge of business, and none whatever of science. Their attempts at investigation into the causes and classifications of successful publicity were perfectly childish and idle, without either common sense or proportion.

The number of investigators who, on the other hand, were fortunate in their knowledge of science is quite small. Their work has been very helpful in clarifying the psychological elements of publicity, and relating these elements one to another. Contributions of high value have been made by Scott, Cherington, Hollingsworth, Strong, Starch, and others, who have shown originality and power in their investigations. Their work will remain as prime among the first rational attempts to apply the scientific method of analysis to the psychology of advertising.

It must be said, however, that there is an economic and a mathematical side to publicity, and this has



not received the same attention as the psychological side. Again, as in all the work I have examined in this line, there is always an element of mystery, or of far-fetched metaphysical involvement, which, well enough as it may be for a text-book of psychology, is certainly, so far as practical business is concerned, empty.

A study of publicity, conducted with every care and attention to scientific methods — and by that I mean the methods that are used in chemistry, physics, zoölogy, geology, astronomy and the experimental, observational and mathematical sciences in general — will reveal nothing which the practical business man cannot understand as easily as he understood his arithmetic when he was a boy.

In the first place, the average successful business man has an unusually high degree of intellect. He is a capable generalizer, an acute observer, a sound theorist, and an experimentalist from his birth. Otherwise he would never be in business at all. The average business man is far and away a better man mentally than the *average man* — who, as a general rule, is an employee of the business man. The average business man is not a scientist simply because he has not devoted himself to science. Did he care to do so, he would be a good scientist. On the other hand, the good scientist would make a first-class business man if he could be persuaded to devote

himself to business. Both scientist and business man are away above the average run of their fellows, and the fact that they occupy the positions they do is altogether due to that reason.

Very few people — take them in the run — have either the brains or industry to be either business men or scientists. The great majority — the great herd of men — are too dull, too lazy, too little interested in themselves or their fellow-men, to *do* or *be* more than they are. Therefore, I say that when the business man allows an advertising agent to *talk down* at him, he is underestimating his own power. The business man who will read this book with as much care and attention as he devotes to an ordinary transaction will see the facts of publicity as clearly as I have seen them myself. And if thereafter he does not subject his publicity to the same careful scrutiny he applies to the other arms of his investment, he will have himself alone to blame if his results are on the wrong side of the sheet.

It has always struck me as a strange thing that the business man will scrutinize all his investments with a microscope, save and except his advertising appropriations. Why he should think that this money should be invested on the hit-or-miss plan — like the purchase of a ticket in a Mexican lottery — is more than I can understand. Why he should “go it blind” in publicity, and use a microscope in every other department of his business, is certainly a

mystery — unless we assume that he does so because he *cannot help himself*. And that assumption would be the correct one.

*He goes it blind because he does not know.*

It is to help him to a practical knowledge of publicity that I have written this book.

The purpose of my investigation was originally to help myself. My experience as an advertiser moved me to study the forces at work in publicity in order, if possible, to tame them to my own uses. My problem was to analyze the facts of publicity into their ultimate elements — to get as complete a knowledge as possible of the working of the forces that made publicity pay or not pay, as the case might be. If we can pick to pieces the entire mechanism of publicity, take it apart, as a boy does a clock, and put it together again, we shall have a far better and clearer understanding of its operation than we have had in the past. And, fortunately, I found at the very beginning of my analysis that the entire business was taking on a *mathematical* aspect — that the elementary laws of advertising were mathematical laws, each one of which was capable of being expressed in a *formula*; that each law grew out of the one preceding it, as regularly and naturally as the laws of arithmetic, algebra, geometry, or trigonometry.

Furthermore, I found that these mathematical laws were *exceedingly simple*: so simple that a boy

of sixteen can understand them, and can see how they hang together, like the propositions of Euclid which he studies in his geometry. I found furthermore that these laws of publicity are each and every one of them concerned altogether with the *selling power* of publicity; and that all of them are virtually derived from more deeply lying laws of economics — many of which are proverbs of trade.

If you, Mr. Business Man, will study these matters with a little grave attention, you will begin to realize where you have been in the dark in the matter of publicity and its selling power; and you will be able then to put your finger on weak spots in your publicity campaigns and, in a high degree, be the *boss* of your own publicity — as you are of the other departments of your enterprise.

## Chapter II

### SOME ELEMENTS OF PUBLICITY

Whenever you issue a piece of publicity — and whatever you put out as an advertisement — your purpose is to *sell goods*. I may say your *only* purpose is to sell goods. You have no other purpose whatever. If your advertisement does not sell goods it is a failure, and the money it cost might just as well have been thrown away.

Therefore, what you wish to know most ardently is the *selling power* of your publicity; and more than that, you wish to know the selling power of the publicity *before* the publicity is issued and paid for. In other words, it is folly to buy a pig in a poke.

The selling power of publicity is therefore the *only* question with which the advertiser has to do, or about which he need bother himself at all.

What is the selling power of publicity? What are the rules — the laws — that govern the selling power of publicity? What are the elements that go to make up selling power? Why is it that the selling power of one particular advertisement, or campaign, is very high, while another, costing the same or more money, and apparently quite as ingenious and attractive, is an utter failure? Is there a method

by which we can say in advance whether any particular publicity will be a *seller of goods*, and to what extent? Is there a method by which we can *predict* the results of any particular publicity campaign?

Now, publicity promoters of every kind, and advertisers of every kind, have always recognized the need of two or three main things as desirable in advertisements of all kinds. One of these prime needs is that of attracting the *attention* of the individual. The advocate of publicity will tell you that it is necessary to get the attention of people to your advertisement. And inasmuch as getting a man's attention is necessary no matter what may be your purpose with him — unless you wish to avoid injury at his hands, or desire, on the other hand, to waylay and rob him unawares, or otherwise discomfit him or take him by *surprise* — we will admit at the start that the getting of the individual's attention is of prime importance in publicity.

But my purpose here is not to go to the trouble of proving to you something which you already know. I wish first and only to *investigate* the attention feature of publicity; to dig deeper into the matter of attention, and to reduce it to law, in order to bring out all the facts about it. For it is not only possible, but perfectly true, that there is such a thing as the getting of *too much* attention — as getting so much of it that it kills the selling power of your publicity totally. Did it ever occur to you that you could get

so much attention in publicity that the very power of the attention would kill you—would reduce the selling power of your publicity to zero? But such is the cold fact; and we shall see how it works when we come to analyze the attention value of publicity in detail.

Another feature of successful publicity is its power of persuasion. You must not only attract to your goods the attention of the buyer of goods, but you must persuade him to buy by some argument, some device, some sort of *suasion* that moves him to buy. It should be clear that much of the success of your publicity will depend upon its *suasion* value as well as upon its attention value. The two things are inseparably bound up with each other, and we shall see that their relations can be formulated in such a manner as to give the advertiser the key to the knowledge he most desires — the knowledge *in advance* as to whether his publicity will have a high or a low selling power.

Still another thing which enters into the selling power of publicity is the *number* of individuals the publicity reaches — its circulation. But the number (or *radius*) of its circulation is only *one* of the features of circulation. Our investigation of the question of circulation will show us that it is possible to get *too much circulation*; that it is possible to kill the selling power of publicity by *too large* a circulation; that circulation is sometimes — too often, in

fact — a deadly thing that robs the advertiser, skins him, and ruins him, instead of helping him. We shall find that the longer the radius of circulation (that is, the higher the number) the greater the waste in certain circumstances: all of which must interest the man who pays the bills.

The advertiser must also consider another equally important factor of publicity. That is, the number of times the publicity is repeated. He must figure the effect (on the selling power of his publicity) of the number of times his publicity is repeated. And in this connection he must also figure the changes that must be made in the *form* of his appeal. He must not believe that the mere repetition of a successful advertisement will continue to produce the business that it produced at first. If he does, he is throwing away just so much of his advertising appropriations year after year. He must consider these two things *together*, for both are bound up, as we shall discover, in one and the same law. You cannot separate these two factors from each other in their practical results. They are mathematically bound with each other, and we shall see how at the proper time and in the proper place.

Again, in your publicity, you must consider the main facts in the business of buying and selling. You must not advertise under the delusion that you are advertising to a "buying public"; that you are appealing to a mass of people who buy things. This



mistake has cost the lives of thousands of concerns, who have spent their entire selling resources in advertising their goods to a mythical "buying public" that did not exist. These concerns have gone out of business. The selling power of publicity is bound by an absolute law in this respect, which the business man can easily see — once it is pointed out to him. X

Another law which the advertiser must reckon with is concerned with the actual determinants of sales. What finally prompts the buyer to buy? X For it is clear that the advertiser who neglects this glaring element in the actual selling of goods is advertising with his eyes shut. Thousands upon thousands of business concerns have gone out of existence just because they did not know what kinds of buyers bought their goods. They were squandering their selling resources in the hopeless effort of trying to sell goods to individuals who would not take the goods for a gift! Amazing, isn't it? Yet, alas! it is true.

Once more, the advertiser must consider the actual, not the theoretical, facts in the matter of maintaining a given amount of publicity over very considerable periods of time. What is the effect on the selling power of publicity when the same amount of publicity (not precisely the same individual advertisements) is maintained at an unvarying level? Do sales increase or decrease in these circumstances?

From the above considerations it appears that the

success of publicity means a little more than a slapdash splurge, letting people know you have goods to sell. It would appear that several essentially different elements enter into the selling power of publicity, and that these elements are not to be considered singly, but in *relation to one another*. For the attention power and suasion power of your publicity must be figured with the circulation; and the circulation and its kind must be figured with the number of times your publicity is repeated; and these must be figured with the manner in which the appeal is made; and with the individuality of the buyer; and with the facts that determine him in his purchase of goods; and all of the preceding must be figured with the length of time during which your publicity is maintained at a given level.

But there are a few other elements that enter into the selling power of publicity, and to these I will now call your attention.

### Chapter III

#### SOME OTHER ELEMENTS OF PUBLICITY

Whether publicity will have a high or low selling power will depend in large measure on the *nature of the medium* that bears it, when the medium is considered *in relation to its circulation*. Choice of the right medium is really half the battle. If you do not select the right medium you may as well throw your money into the river. And your publicity appropriation will come back to you in exactly the proportion as the *kind* of medium you select is right or wrong—near to, or remote from, the kind of medium that is *best for your goods*.

Observe I say *kind* of medium. I do not mean selecting the medium with the largest circulation at all. I mean the *kind* of medium. There are *space* media, *specialty* media, and *premium* media. These are the three grand *kinds* of media. Then there are varieties in these kinds of media themselves. Space has several different varieties of media, so have specialties and premiums. And your selling power is absolutely bound up with the kind and the variety of the medium you select. Some space media are worthless; some specialty media are worthless; some premium media are worthless.

If through any ignorance of your own, or through the persuasion of your ignorance by interested parties who care more for their own interests than for yours, you select, or allow others to select for you, media that are worthless for your purposes, you are throwing your money away.

You must not only see to and criticise, sift and examine, the selling power of your publicity in *one* respect; you must do so in *all* respects—for the whole chain is no stronger than its weakest link. What is the absolute law that rules the selling power of publicity where media are concerned? And what are the specific relations of media with circulation? You should know at first hand the true answer to these vitally important questions.

✓ The selling power of your publicity is also absolutely ruled by the peculiar *character of your goods*. A mistake made here in issuing and placing publicity is the source of waste in its wildest form. Do your goods in their very nature put a limit on their own consumption? Is the consumption of your goods limited by the nature of the goods themselves? Is the *consuming* power (to say nothing of the buying power) of the individuals who use your goods limited by nature to a fixed quantity? Can the persons to whom you address your publicity use much or little of your goods at will? In how much and to what degree are your goods a necessary of life? These are questions of the utmost import to

the man who is buying publicity. And these questions are absolutely bound up in a common law with the selling power of the publicity you use.

Again, has your publicity the right amount and the right kind of value in always forcing the person who sees it to think of all your previous publicity which may have struck his eye in the past? For the selling power of your publicity will depend upon its value in this respect also. How can you determine by looking at your advertisements, *before* they are placed, whether their selling power will be high or low in this respect? You should know that this association value of your publicity is inextricably bound up — tangled up, as it were — with the attention-getting power and the suasion power of your publicity; and that if these relations are not observed, if your publicity is devised and issued without due attention being paid to the laws that govern these relations, you are cutting down your selling power in just the degree in which these things are neglected by the party or parties to whom you have entrusted the management of your publicity, be your publicity big or little, expensive or cheap, national or local.

Lastly, the selling power of publicity is vitally affected by the character of your goods, the extent to which they are a necessary of life, and the extent to which they are sold under a *monopoly* or under *competition*. These three elements must be figured *together*, not separately. If your goods are sold

under a monopoly the selling power of publicity will work one way when the goods are a necessary, and another way when they are not. Likewise, the same thing is true if the goods are sold under competition: the selling power will be one thing or another as the goods are a necessary or not, and in the *degree* in which they are a necessary.

Every dollar of publicity put out without a careful consideration of these factors of selling power is a pure speculation. It is as uncertain in its results as a bet on the stock market when you know nothing of stocks. Publicity issued with a clean-cut knowledge of the game is, to haphazard publicity, what the buying and selling of stocks by the sharks of Wall Street is to the blind gambling of the sucker whom they fleece.

Publicity can be made to pay, but the bare fact that you advertise does not mean that you will always sell goods. Publicity has selling power. Even blind, unguided publicity will often result in good fortune; but it is always good *fortune*; it is never good *business*. Publicity is a superb tool with which to get business. But publicity is a frightfully destructive tool when it is used by unskilled heads and hands, or when it is prostituted and used as a sand-bag or a jimmy to rob the man who pays for it. Let us say, again, it is like a triple expansion engine of high power which, when intelligently directed, will push a huge ship over the ocean

and safe into port; but when used by ignorant or selfish hands will run wild, with loss of ship, crew, and cargo.

We have then to study *the selling power* of publicity and to ascertain its laws and its functions. Of these laws there are fifteen, not one of which can be overlooked if the user of publicity would use it with his eyes open, and get out of his publicity the last unit of selling power it can have. Publicity will return to you the exact sum of selling power you put into it: no more, no less. But there are several limits to the quantity of selling power you can put into publicity, and within these limits the publicity will work. These limits I have attempted to work out and define in the chapters which follow.

I shall try to pull publicity to pieces—not to tear it violently apart, but to discover where it naturally falls to pieces, as the small boy unscrews the clock-work. This analysis will discover to us that the laws which govern the selling power of publicity are in reality very simple, when each of them is considered by itself. It will show us that the various laws which fix the selling power naturally fit one into another, and can be reassembled after they have been dissociated. In the analysis it will appear that selling power is resolvable into a small number of definite elements. These are attention, suasion, the specific character of the medium, the extent (or radius) of the circulation, the frequency of repetition

and change in the form of the appeal, the directness of appeal, the determinants of sales, the maintenance of publicity at a given level, the variety of the media used, the consumability of the goods by the individual, the degree in which the goods are a necessary, the association power of the publicity, and the competitive or monopolistic character of the market.

Not one of these elements can be left out of our estimate of the selling power of publicity. There are not many of them, but such as they are, they all equally are important. Each has a vital effect upon all the others, and all have a direct bearing on each. My propositions in which I state the laws of these elements are simple and easily understood. And I ask you, Mr. Business Man, in your own interest and in the interests of business in general, to devote a little of your time to their consideration: for if you are using publicity you may be using it blindly, without an intelligent understanding of the causes at work under the surface of things. If you are not using it, you may see your way clear to the reasons why you have not found it profitable. And if you never intend to use it, you will at least gain a clear insight into one of the most deeply rooted and richly branching institutions of modern commercial life.

It is a study which, as a business man myself, I have very deeply enjoyed; and if I have not pursued



the mathematical and economic elaboration farther than the limits of the very elements themselves, I have not done so just because such elaboration would be useless for the practical business man, who wants results, and who would like to know precisely how and why he gets them.

## *Chapter IV*

### **MEDIA AND CIRCULATION**

Advertising, in the modern meaning of the word, is publicity issued for the purpose of selling goods or services. Whenever, in this book, I use the word advertising, or the word publicity, I mean commercial advertising, and commercial publicity.

Now, in order to advertise it is necessary to use some medium that carries the advertisement. An advertising medium is a concrete thing that bears the message of the advertiser to the person whom he wishes to enlighten concerning the goods or the services which the advertiser has for sale.

Advertising, or publicity, has been classified in various ways, but a careful analysis of the practice will show that publicity, like most other things, is a mechanism: the mechanism consisting of the persons who prepare the publicity and the persons who prepare the media, together with the publicity itself (the finished and published advertisement) and the persons who see the publicity when it is uttered. The mainspring, or power, of the mechanism is the advertisement itself, which keeps the entire mechanism in motion. The result of the movement is the sale of goods or services — when

the machine is built and operated with intelligence and skill.

Advertising is best classified by the media which carry it. Thus, publicity carried by a journal of any kind, or by outdoor signs of any kind, or by circulars, letters, catalogs, or other similar devices, is called space advertising. When the advertiser places his message on some article of more or less value, or use, such as a calendar, a pocketknife, or any other thing of utility or beauty, which he gives away gratis to gain the good will of the recipient, the publicity is called specialty advertising, and the medium (that is, the object given away) is called an advertising specialty. When the advertiser offers an article of value, such as a clock, or other thing of utility or beauty, as a prize to be given to the person who will buy a certain amount of goods, the medium is called a *premium* medium. So that in its widest possible conception, we may say that all advertising media can be classified under three great kinds: space media, specialty media, and premium media. There are no other kinds of advertising media, and there are no other kinds of advertising. A circus parade, for example, is precisely the same thing as a pocketknife, or a calendar, given away to make friends. It is specialty advertising pure and simple, the only difference being that the medium is not *given* to the persons whose trade is desired, and the advertisement itself

is partly living and partly inanimate, not wholly inanimate, like the pocketknife or the calendar.

Each of the three kinds of media themselves can be classified into two broad kinds, and these two kinds will, upon analysis, be seen to be marked off absolutely from each other by the *character of the circulation* of the medium.

Of circulation there are *two* kinds, and therefore there are two kinds of media, when media are regarded from *the circulation point of view*. First, there is what we may call *specific* circulation. When the advertising medium is brought into visual contact with persons who are in the habit of buying the goods advertised — actual buyers, or possible actual buyers — the circulation is specific.

Specific circulation may be determined either by the *buying power* of the persons of which it consists, or by the narrow or special limits of the *wants* of these persons. For example, if you are selling diamonds, and your medium reaches only those who can or do buy diamonds, your circulation is specific for the buying power. If you are selling cotton waste, or steel washers, and your medium reaches only those who are in *need* of cotton waste or steel washers, your circulation is specific for the *wants*, or needs, of your circulation.

Now for the second kind of circulation: It should be clear that a circulation might be of such a character as to straddle these two; that your medium

might circulate not only to persons who can and do buy diamonds, cotton waste and washers, but also to countless thousands who never, under any circumstances, buy any one of these articles.

In that case your circulation would be specific only in so far as your medium reached buyers or possible buyers of diamonds, cotton waste, or washers. In all other respects your circulation would be *general*. In the first case, we would say that the medium were specific in the highest possible degree. Its specificity would be as high as possible. In the second case its specificity would be low.

If the medium were of a kind the specificity of which were absolutely limited to persons in specific want of the goods, or to persons whose buying power did not prohibit them from buying the goods, you would say that your specific circulation was high. If the medium were of a *general* character, that is, if it reached *some* who were in special want of the goods, and *some* whose small buying power did not prohibit purchase, while at the same time it would reach vast numbers who did not want the goods or could not buy them, the specificity of the medium would be low.

Now the specificity of some media is elastic, while of others it is rigid. It is elastic only when the medium and its circulation are absolutely under the control of the advertiser — when the *advertiser can select the persons before whom the medium is placed*.

For example, if you are using circulars, letters, catalogs, or specialties, or novelties as your media, you can place your medium before persons selected by yourself, and thus make your circulation as specific or as general as you wish. The medium is *elastic*. It need not always reach the same persons and the same number of persons whenever it is used.\*

If, on the other hand, your medium is a billboard, a newspaper, or a journal of any kind with a fixed circulation, or rather a circulation that cannot be expanded or contracted at will, that cannot be *controlled* by the advertisers or others, the specificity of both medium and circulation is rigid.

All these facts are of vital importance to the advertiser, and we shall see how in the pages that are to follow. Here it is my purpose to place before the reader the prime necessity of understanding the nature of *media and circulation* in all uses of publicity. This is my purpose, because advertisers, as well as the persons to whom they entrust the making and placing of their publicity, are as yet in ignorance concerning the meaning and force of these things, with the result that much waste is encompassed. Of all the contributory causes of the frightful waste in publicity with which this country is cursed, ignorance of the meaning of media and circulation is one of the most alarming. Waste in publicity means high cost of living for many ultimate consumers. High cost of living means lowered buying power;

low buying power means small consumption; small consumption means contracted production; contracted production means higher prices, idle men, and lower wages; these spell commercial languor and social wrong. And in all this retrogression in industry there is no one contributing cause more potent than unsound and unproductive publicity. There are other causes of course; but this particular cause is the one with which we are most concerned here.

Let us therefore bear in mind the purpose of our present study. That purpose is none other than *economy in advertising*. For it should be clear to the business man that if he is uselessly taxing his selling cost, somebody is reaping a benefit, and that somebody is neither himself nor the ultimate consumer—the two parties whose interests are, at bottom, identical.

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\* Of course this does not go at all into the difficulty of getting mail appeals read. The belief is general that more than 90 per cent of all advertising letters, circulars and mailing cards are brushed into the wastebasket without more than a glance. But this misfortune for the advertiser has no bearing on this definition of "elastic" media. The art developed in this book will enable the advertiser to devise his appeals so as to put them among that comparatively small per cent which are noticed and read.

## Chapter V

### ATTENTION, DEMAND, AND SALES

It is a proverb of the advertising promoter that the value of publicity varies with its power of attracting the attention of the public. But like almost all the other proverbs of promoters (who are invariably talking for a commission, and who cannot see farther than the point at which the commission steps in), this one has been made with an eye to the main chance.

Publicity promoters are like the shyster criminal lawyer who was defending a negro charged with having stolen a pair of pants. In his argument to the jury he confined himself to a vivid and heart-rending description of the wreck of a ship at sea in which 500 lives were lost. His client was convicted. But the lawyer seemed, nevertheless, to be immensely pleased with himself and his line of defense. At the end of the trial a curious officer of the court congratulated him on the splendor of his oratory, but asked him what the wreck of the ship had to do with the theft of the trousers.

The lawyer smiled condescendingly.

"Don't you know," said he, "that the first thing necessary in a case like this is to *rivet the attention*



*of the jury?* And I flatter myself, sir, that I succeeded in doing it!"

The advertisement that succeeds in riveting the attention of the public *and in doing nothing more*, is very like the shyster. It puts a big fee in the pocket of the agent, or in the pocket of the owner of the medium, and it leaves out in the cold the man who pays the bill.

The importance of getting the attention of the jury is prime. Of course it is. But what, let us ask, is the purpose of getting its attention? Is it not to free the client, to give the client a return for the fee he has paid — probably in advance? Is it not to arouse the interest of the jury in the plight of the client himself? And is not the purpose of getting the attention of a public of any kind — I mean getting the attention of the *individuals* of whom the public consists — a mere trick or device — a mere prelude, to the grand result that is accomplished when, his attention riveted, *the individual buys the goods?*

We may therefore lay down as a law that the primary step in the act of advertising is the attraction of the attention of individuals; but we must bear in mind that the mere attraction of attention by no means serves the final purpose for which the advertising is done.

This final purpose, as everybody knows, is the sale of the thing that is advertised. While the

primary step — the proximate step — is getting the individual's attention, the ultimate step is the selling of goods. And the selling of goods is, I am sorry to say, the very last thing the advertising promoter thinks of. He works on the theory — and he talks on the theory — that if attention be attracted goods will be sold as a matter of natural sequence.

Now this selfish theory of the advertising pleader is positively and absolutely false. Let us analyze the matter a little.

When you advertise for the purpose of attracting attention you must ask yourself whose attention it is you are trying to attract. You are trying to attract the attention of whom? If you are not an outright ostrich with your head in the sand, you should know that you are trying to attract the attention of individuals who are *buyers*, or *possible buyers*. It is an enormous waste of energy to succeed in attracting the attention of a retail druggist to the magnificent line of scrap iron you are carrying, even though you were to use a bludgeon for the purpose, and a gold-mounted bludgeon at that, for which you had paid a large sum of money. You would not only have to attract the attention of the druggist, but you would have to hypnotize him, or make him into a pure lunatic, before you could sell him your goods.

These facts should be perfectly clear to the average business man, but I am sorry to say they are not.

The average business man, under the hypnotic influence of the advertising promoter, has been led to believe that if he can, by advertising, attract the attention of individuals without number, regardless of whom or of what they may be, the trick is done.

Now do not mistake my position. I urge as a law that attention is prime; that attention is one of the first requisites of a successful advertising campaign, whether it be in space media, in specialty media, or in premium media. But of two space advertisements, equally strong in their attention-getting power, one may be a magnificent success as an actual seller of goods, and the other may be a flat failure. Why? We may say as a general answer to the above question that there are two elements in the selling power of any particular advertisement, when we assume that the *demand* for the goods is normal—two elements, when the demand is normal. By that I mean that the demand (except in so far as it can be switched from one brand of goods to another) is neither increased nor diminished by publicity.

The first of these elements is attention, and this I will examine first; for it is clear that if the demand for soap, for example, is constant in a community, and the quality and price of all soaps offered be known to buyers to be the same—if buyers have no ground of *preference*—why, then, the best known soap will doubtless be the best seller. Such a case,

however, is never found in actual practice. All users of soap have *some* kind of preference, and it is right here that the advertising promoter makes his fatal error. When he devises publicity that is *just bound* to attract attention, he is doing so on the short-sighted theory that he is dealing with an imaginary public who *have no preferences whatever*. He believes that the selling power of publicity is proportional to its power of attracting attention, and in this he is as wrong as wrong can be.

In the first place demand is *not* universally the same. There is more demand for soap in one city than in another of the same size; in some sections of the country than in others; among certain classes of people than among others. Secondly, there is *always* a preference in the minds of buyers, whether based on sound judgment or not.

If the mere attraction of attention were the only thing to be considered in successful advertising we would find here and there conspicuous examples of its force. Unfortunately, such examples are not to be found at all. As a matter of fact, the history of American business during the past 25 or 30 years is cluttered with the wrecks and scrap-heaps of fortunes lost by the sole method of paying out money for attention-getting publicity that never even paid for itself. Look through the files of the magazines and you will find that 90 per cent of the advertisers of even a comparatively few years ago

have disappeared, and their places have been taken by new adventurers on very much the same road to extinction. These wrecks and scrap-heaps are the monuments of the advertising promoter's theory that merely attention-getting publicity pays.

Yes, it *does* pay, but the law by which it operates must be borne in mind, and that law can be framed only after *all* the elements that enter into the advertising problem are compounded and computed together. In other words, the power of attention-getting is only *one* of these elements. In space publicity there are two, attention-getting power and one other. This other is what we may call *suasion*; and to an analysis of suasion, and its relation to attention, I will now direct the reader's thought.

## Chapter VI

### SUASION

At the bottom of all competition in trade lies the great fact or principle that it is necessary first to prevent our competitors from taking a single jot of our trade away from us; and, secondly, to take away from our competitors as much of their trade as we possibly can. The tool of trade-getting we use to accomplish these two purposes is — suasion.

It may be an active suasion, in which the mind of the buyer is influenced through such agencies as salesmanship, circulars, catalogs, services of various kinds, general publicity, premiums, or other active campaigning to get or to hold trade; or it may be a passive suasion, in which the mind of the buyer is influenced by the quality or price of the goods, or other advantage or desirability. With passive suasion we need not concern ourselves here, because passive suasion is a very small part of the selling art in the game of competition. Active suasion is the matter we have in hand, and active suasion in the particular aspect of its use found in advertising. Specifically, we have here to consider *suasion in its relation to attention-getting in publicity*, especially

when general publicity, or space advertising, is the form of publicity used.

The word suasion is only another form of the word *persuasion*, and it has the selfsame meaning. To *persuade* is to influence the mind through pressure of argument or pressure of any other kind; and suasion is the act, or process, of doing so.

It is very easy, for example, to attract the attention of a millionaire in the street, or the attention of a small boy who is about to eat an apple. But it is a really difficult thing, after you have attracted the attention of either, to persuade the millionaire to give you a thousand dollars offhand, or the boy to give you three-fourths of his apple. The thing can be done, quite true. It is by no means an impossible performance, but the person who does it must have a peculiar *power of suasion*. A big stick, if backed up by the right kind of oral argument, will do it; but in the science of emporology, that is, the science of merchandising (from the Greek word *emporos*, a merchant, or *emporion*, a market), we do not account for the use of big sticks to win trade. On the contrary, we figure on what is called *moral suasion*. Men use psychological suasion. They try to persuade the buyer that it is to his interest or profit to buy their particular brand of goods. They try, by moral suasion, to *sell* the buyer their goods. They try to make sales.

Now it should be clear that in the transaction of

selling two things are necessary: The attention of the buyer must be attracted, and the buyer must be persuaded, actively or passively, to buy the goods.

Advertising promoters therefore sometimes momentarily overlook their theory that attention-getting is the only consideration, and often try to inject into their "copy" some little remark, quite incidental, however, to the main attention-getting idea (which is organic with them), calculated to impress the reader of the advertisement with the notion that the goods advertised are worth paying for! They unconsciously admit the existence of the two essential elements. They attract the attention (the main thing in their theory) and then, so naturally does the suasion follow, they just cannot help putting in a *reason why* the goods should be bought.

In truth, advertising promoters are beginning to realize that the day of the great attention-getting splurge and splash in publicity is riding rapidly to its fall. They are beginning to realize that the man who is paying for the advertising has a few rights in the premises, and that he should at least be given a run for his money. They are beginning to realize, in a dim, obscure way, it is true, that there is a mysterious force at work in advertising problems which they are wholly incompetent to solve, and they are testing out their way over the marsh and bog by planting a foot here, and a foot there, in the hope of touching solid ground.



What are some examples of *suasion*?

When a cereal company advertises that professors, preachers, and brainy men in general eat oats for breakfast; when a business concern adds "Established 1824" after its name; when the automobile maker tacks on the word "noiseless" to the picture of his machine; when a hotel advertises itself as "absolutely fireproof"; when the fountain beverage is tipped as "refreshing"; when tobacco is described as the kind that "does not burn the tongue"; when the food product is said to be prepared in a "clean and sanitary factory"; when, in brief, any word or sign calculated to appreciate the goods in the mind of the reader of the advertisement is added to the main attention-getting device, the purpose of the addition is to persuade the reader to buy the goods, and *suasion* is the tool used to do so.

All these addenda to the main attention-getting splurge are in reality little admissions made by the advertising promoter that the goods *do* cut some figure in the transaction; they are silent concessions, or rather unconscious concessions, that buyers *do* have preference, and that to sway preference it is necessary to let buyers — when their attention has been sufficiently attracted — know that there is advantage in preferring the brand that is advertised.

The first consideration, therefore, in publicity is the need of attracting attention. But the mere

attraction of attention is not sufficient to cause buyers to prefer the goods that are advertised in a market where several different brands of similar goods are all advertised with equal attention-getting power. Attention is gained by conspicuousness or ingenuity of the advertisement, and after attention has been won it must be reinforced by the power of suasion.

## Chapter VII

### THE SELLING POINT OR SELLING POWER OF PUBLICITY.

*The selling point of an advertisement lies at the intersection of its attention-getting power with the power of its suasion.*

In a space advertisement, according to general practice, there are several ways of attracting the attention of the beholder, and most of them are worthless. One way is to use a large space and to center the advertisement in the middle of that space, so that the contrast of the *blank* space with the *used* space is vivid and striking. Another method is that of making an ingenious combination of words (whether with or without meaning seems, in general practice, to be indifferent — attention being the only desideratum), or an ingenious figure, picture, or sign of any kind. Another is that of using glaring contrasts of color. Still another is to use any of the three last-mentioned devices in combination with the large space, so that you have the striking sign, whether of word, picture, or color, in high contrast with the wide expanse of space surrounding it.

When the advertisement is in the form of a specialty, or novelty, or yet again of a premium (and

these forms of publicity, especially the latter, as we shall see later on, are the most subtle and most powerful media both as attention-getters and persuaders), the devices used are peculiarly adapted to the special form the publicity takes. These points I shall discuss in the chapters on the selling power of specialties and premiums. In the present chapter all the argument that applies to space, with reference to attention-getting and suasion, applies with equal force to specialties and premiums, and unless it is especially designated as applying to space only, the reader must understand that the argument is all-inclusive. It takes in all possible or conceivable kinds of publicity. If our general laws failed in this all-inclusive scope, they would not be worth the discussion. To return, now, to the special concept of space advertising.

It should be perfectly clear that there is an upward limit to the attention-getting power of mere space as used above. I mean that a small sign in the center of the white-painted wall of a two-story house will attract just as much attention as a similar sign, made to scale, and placed on the side of a gigantic grain elevator, with an open view for a long distance all around. Again, such a small sign centered in the middle of a page in a magazine has as much attention-getting power as the same sign scaled to a page in a daily newspaper, many times the area of the page in the magazine. And, finally, the sign centered on the

magazine page will be as powerful in its attention value as the same sign, made to scale, and centered on the side of the grain elevator. In other words, there is a point where *the stimulus of increasing space fails to generate an increased power of getting the attention*. This point I will call *the space-limit attention point*.

The above logic applies, of course, only to the attention that is aroused in the individual, not to the *number of individuals* whose attention is aroused. Thus a page in a magazine of large circulation might arouse the attention of an infinitely larger number of individuals than a sign painted on the side of a mountain, and seen only by the passengers on trans-continental trains, and that only in the daytime, when even then but a small proportion of the passengers would actually look at it. The question of *circulation* I will discuss in another place.

We can now formulate a law of space using as follows:

*The attention-getting power of the space used in a space advertisement is limited by the space-limit attention point of the space itself.*

But there is always another element of attention-getting, and that is the attention power of the *sign* itself — the words, pictures, or other symbols. To the attention power of *this* element there is practically no limit whatever, except that which may be found in the mind of the beholder himself. If, however,

we imagine a sign of very low attention power, placed at the attention point of space, that is, in a space beyond which no higher degree of attention is secured, we can see that such an advertisement will arouse more attention than the same sign or symbol placed in space much *below* the attention point. On the other hand, an ingenious design, or compound of words, may compensate for a considerable recession from the attention point, and thus we could have an advertisement in a space much below the attention point which, because of its ingenuity or strikingness, might attract more attention than a less ingenious sign centered in space up to the full limit of the attention point itself. So that, when attention-getting power is considered, we must figure not only the attention-getting power of the mere space, but of the sign in the space also. We can, therefore, reduce these facts to formula as follows:

*The attention-getting power of an advertisement is not only limited by the attention point of its space but also by the attention power of the symbols used in the space.*

It should be clear, once more, that given the highest attention-getting power which can be put into an advertisement by following these laws, still if *suasion* were lacking in such an advertisement the actual *selling power* of the advertisement would not be nearly as high as that of another advertisement similar in all respects save one — namely, its suasion.

Let us say, for example, that we have two advertisements of the same attention point of space, and the same attention power in the ingenuity or emphasis of its legend, advertising, let us say, two brands of soap. Let one of these publish simply the name of the soap; let the other add the suggestion that the soap is "Bland and Healing."

In such a case, all other things being equal, such as price, quality, and so on, we *know* that the advertisement bearing the suasion would outsell the other. If now, however, you should qualify either advertisement with the suasion-word, "Scented," you would introduce another element — that of taste or fancy — and would limit the sale to those buyers who fancied scented soap. But *among* such buyers you would unquestionably have a larger sale than you would were this special appeal omitted. I will return to all these variations of selling power later. Here let us consider only selling capacity in general.

In the play of the one force against the other — in the play of the attention-power against the suasion-power of the advertisement — a balance is struck. Let us say rather that one line of force — the line of attention force — intersects or crosses the other — the line of suasion — at some point that is the resultant of the interplay. This point, it is clear again, is the point at which *attention*, compounded with *suasion*, *issues in the sale of the goods*.

This point I have called, in the law stated at the beginning of this chapter, the *selling point*.

Thus we see that while attention-getting power is itself a compound thing — that is, space *plus* the ingenuity or strikingness of the legend or picture — the selling power of an advertisement is also a compound thing, that is, attention-power *plus* the suasion-power of the advertisement. And it is worthy of remark that the two are compounded together in no uncertain way.

Let not the advertiser, therefore, believe that because his advertisement is the most powerful attention-getter in the country, it is also the most powerful business getter. And let him remember, furthermore, that suasion of the printed word, even when used in its most appealing force, is by no means a certain getter of business, although we may say with perfect assurance that its absence from an advertisement renders that advertisement infinitely weaker than the advertisement that is strengthened by its use.



## Chapter VIII

### THE LAW OF SELLING POWER: DEPRESSION AND ELEVATION OF THE SELLING POINT.

*The selling power of publicity varies with its attention value and its suasion.*

In this general law of the selling power of publicity three elements appear: attention value, suasion, and selling power; and these are the three factors which every advertiser who would not waste his money must consider. The purpose of the advertisement being to sell goods, we must figure not only the value of the advertisement as an attention getter, but also its power of persuading the individual whose attention is won — its suasion value; and this whether the advertisement be space, specialty or premium.

Now there are two variations of the above law.

In one of them we can imagine that the attention value is a given one, and that the suasion value varies up and down. In that case we can state the law as follows:

*With a given attention value the selling power of an advertisement varies with its suasion.*

Of course this law applies to two or more advertise-

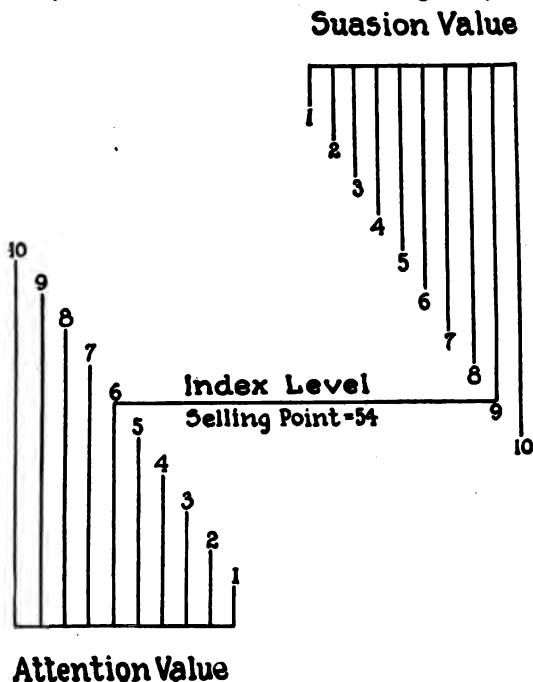
ments of equal attention value but of different suasion values, both of which are competitors. The selling power of the two advertisements will vary with their power of suasion. The advertisement which has the higher suasion value of the two will also have the higher selling power. And the same would be true if, instead of *two* competing advertisements, we were dealing with a thousand.

A few words of explanation may be useful here to the reader who has forgotten his mathematics. In terms of mathematics a *constant* is a number, or a quantity, which does not change its value during a given discussion, as long as another number, or quantity, with which it is intimately related, does not itself change its value. The second quantity is called the *variable* of the constant. For example, if a railroad train, or a bullet, is traveling through space, the distance which it travels depends upon the length of time it is in motion and the rate of speed with which it moves. In this case the distance is the *constant*, and the rate of speed and the length of time during which the object travels are its *independent variables*. In mathematical terms, the distance is a *function* of the time and the rate of speed.

If, now, we say that the train travels between two points 1,000 miles apart, it is clear that the time required to make the journey will depend upon the rate of speed. *The time varies with the speed.* The

# GRAPHIC CHART SHOWING THE LAW OF SELLING POWER

(Index of the Rise and Fall of the Selling Point)



In the case illustrated by the chart the attention value is 6, the suasion value 9, and the selling point, or selling power, or its index,  $6 \times 9$  or 54. It is apparent that the highest possible selling power would be 100; that is, when the attention value were 10 and the suasion value 10 — when attention value and suasion value were both as high as possible, and therefore equal. The rise and fall of the selling point (or selling power) from 1 to 100 or from 100 to 1 can be seen by shifting the horizontal index line up and down the perpendicular lines in the chart.



higher the speed the shorter the time; the lower the speed the longer the time. In this case, the time is the *constant*, the speed is its *independent variable*, and the time is a *function* of the speed.

Now in the law that governs the movements of the selling point, or selling power, of an advertisement, stated at the head of this chapter, it is clear that *the selling power is a function of the suasion*. The selling point moves up and down — the selling power *varies* up and down — as the power of the *suasion to buy* varies up and down — when the attention value of the advertisement remains at par. If the suasion value is increased the selling power increases with it.

Thus let us say that an advertisement is prime in its power of attracting attention to itself, that it has a given effect as an attention-getter, that its attention value is at par, then its power to sell goods will be high or low according as its suasion value — its persuasive power — be high or low. The selling power is a *function* of its independent variable, the suasion. Let the advertisement be one of a brand of smoking tobacco; say an advertisement played up on a billboard or elsewhere with attention-driving devices of prime order. Let the advertisement read, "Soldier Boy Smoking Tobacco: Five Cents." Here there is no suasion other than that contained in the offer to sell tobacco at a low price to those who use tobacco. Now let the suasion value be

*Eight*

increased so that the sign reads, "Soldier Boy Tobacco: Five Cents. Does Not Burn the Tongue." There need be no doubt that with this increase of suasion value the selling power increases.

Now let another increase of suasion value be made. Let the advertisement read, "Soldier Boy Tobacco: Five Cents. Does Not Burn The Tongue. A Premium with Every Dollar's Worth." The suasion value may now be supposed to be as high as it can possibly be, and there need be no doubt again that the selling point moves up accordingly, and sales increase in proportion. *The selling power varies with the suasion.*

These facts — mathematically true in theory — have been demonstrated in practice over and over again.

Two of the great Kings of modern advertising were Beecham, the English pill-maker, and Barnum, the American circus man. Supreme as they were in their separate fields, as purveyors to the public, they never, like certain more modern large advertisers, uttered an advertisement that did not provide, and provide well, for the highest possible suasion value. Beecham advertised his pills thus: "Beecham's Pills. Sold for a Shilling — Worth a Guinea [\$5] a box." Barnum would plaster a town for months before his arrival with the sign, "Wait for Barnum." *Wait* for Barnum — meaning, all other shows will give you only a fraction of the entertain-

ment for the money. Beecham's signs and Barnum's signs were always at the space limit point of attention; and the suasion-element was so happily compounded with the attention-element that it became an attention-element itself. This was so true that both advertisements became household words in England and America. "Worth a guinea" and "Wait for So and So" were rung with infinite changes in the press, on the stage, and in common speech. All popular advertising catch-words are *suasion arguments*, and never anything else.

Sometimes a manufacturer assumes that the excellence of his product is so widely and well known that its mere name is enough — that suasion is not necessary. A type of this is worked out in Harry Leon Wilson's novel, "The Spenders," in which a Chicago packer worried with catch-phrases for an advertisement of his famous hams. He scorned the use of such expedients as "Higsbee's Hams — that's all," because the "that's all" was a suggestion that it was necessary to add something (by way of suasion) to the imperial quality of the hams. And so he centered his advertisement on the sides of grain elevators and elsewhere as simply "Higsbee's Hams." But here you must remark that Higsbee was figuring the suasion as being *understood* — that the goods themselves were the suasion. Imperial products of this kind are very rare. Beecham and Barnum never used this assumption of overmaster-

ing superiority, and they did not because experience had told them that the contrary course was the wise one.

Let us now consider a third law of selling power.

*With a given suasion value the selling power of an advertisement varies with its attention value.*

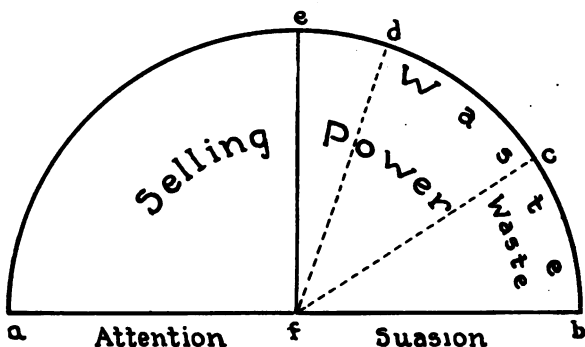
This is assuming that the attention value is variable and the suasion remains at a given point. *Then the selling power is a function of the attention value.*

The force of this law is so manifest that elaboration is scarcely necessary. With a given amount of suasion, it is evident that the selling power of an advertisement will vary up and down with the increase and decrease of the advertisement's power of attracting the attention of the individual. Increase the attention value and the selling power rises; diminish the attention value and the selling power falls.

The practical application of these laws to the art of devisement, uttering or using publicity of any kind should be plain to the man who is investing his money in this arm of business getting. Whether he uses space media, specialty media, or premiums, he will find that his results can be regulated by an intelligent use of the above fundamental facts of the structure and life of business.

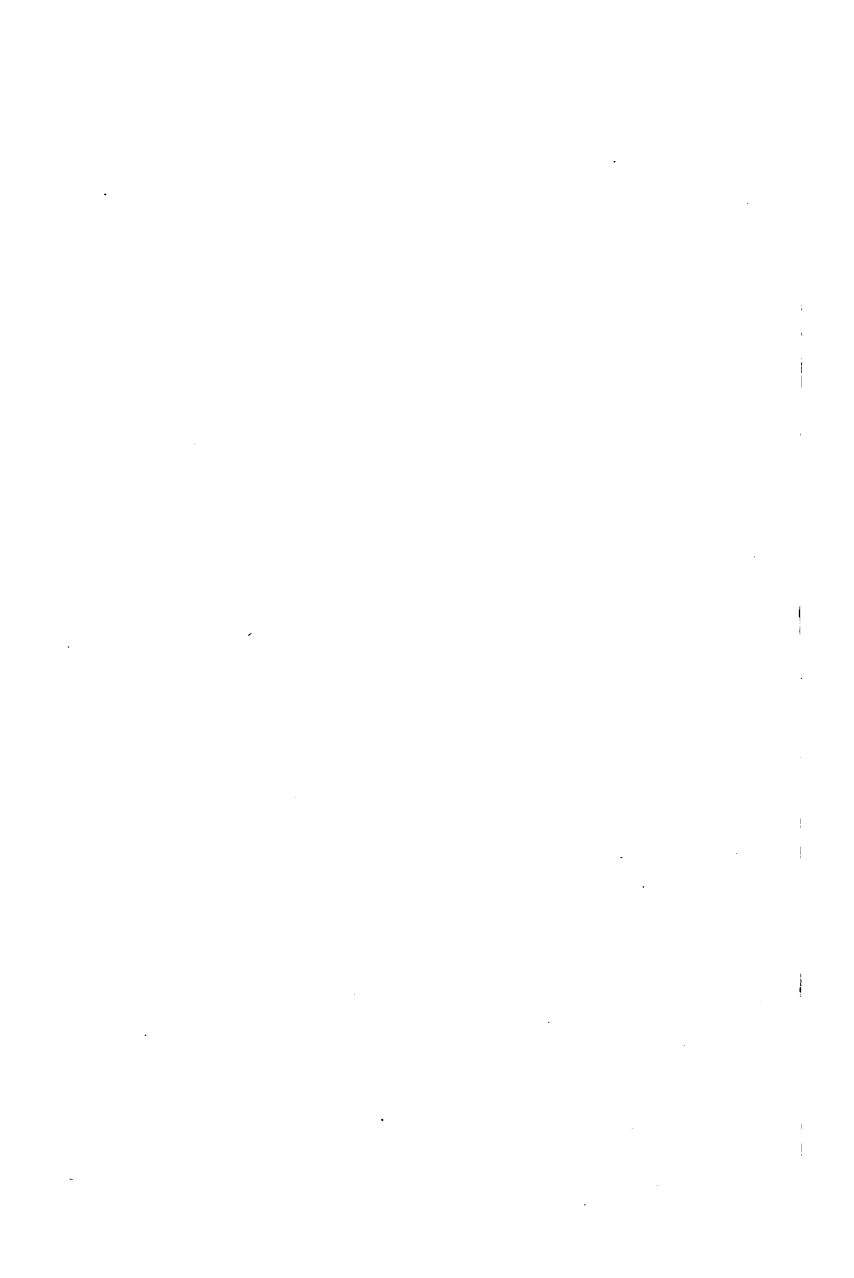


## GRAPHIC CHART SHOWING WASTE OF SELLING POWER



### ARGUMENT

Let the space enclosed by the semicircle  $aeb$  subtended by the diameter  $ab$  represent the total selling power of an advertisement in which the attention value  $aef$  is equal to the suasion value  $feb$ . If now the suasion radius  $fb$  be moved into the position  $fc$ , thus decreasing the suasion value of the advertisement by the angular space subtended by the arc  $cb$ , the total selling power is cut to the angular space subtended by the arc  $ac$ . If the suasion radius be moved still further to the position  $fd$ , the selling power is cut to the angular space subtended by the arc  $ad$ . In which case, *all that part of the figure subtended by the arc  $db$  is waste*. A similar argument prevails when instead of the suasion radius the attention radius is moved into corresponding positions.



## Chapter IX

### THE SELLING POWER OF SPACE AND CIRCULATION

*The selling power of space advertising varies with the specificity of the medium and the radius of its specific circulation.*

When a business man is using space for his advertising medium (and by space I mean all printed words, such as newspapers, magazines, circulars, catalogs, and indoor and outdoor signs) he should carefully inquire into the *specificity* of the medium — that is to say, into the *kind of people* the medium will reach. Few advertisers care to reach *all* kinds of people. For example, a department store would waste its money advertising in the New York Evening Post, because “everybody who reads the New York Evening Post is a millionaire.” On the other hand, Tiffany would lose money if he were to advertise his wares in the newspaper that was the organ of Tammany, circulating only among the poor. Nor would it be sane to advertise nut and bolt machinery in a medical journal, or patent medicines in the Christian Science Monitor.

Again, the man who would advertise automobiles on billboards, in a neighborhood where nobody

would see them except the employees in a neighboring bag factory, would not be wise. Or, the manufacturer who would advertise microscopes or chemical reagents in the New York Clipper would not be investing his money with judicious precision and foresight.

What I wish to drive home by these perfectly obvious arguments is, that the *specific character of the medium is one of the prime considerations in space advertising*. What kind of people does the medium reach? Does it reach people *who want your goods*, and who have the *money to buy them*? The specificity of a medium depends upon the kind of people who see the medium. Trade papers of all kinds, class journals, technical journals and all such publications are *specific media*, and their specificity is high. The specificity here is due to the fact that the circulation of the journal is self-limiting to those persons only who are specially interested in the specific subjects to which the specific medium is devoted.

But specificity is not always a characteristic of the medium as much as it is of the advertiser. A daily paper is not a trade medium by any means, nor is a billboard. But, from the advertiser's point of view, the daily paper is a specific medium in just as far as it reaches that class or those classes of individuals to whom he desires to appeal — the individuals *among whom there is a demand for his goods*, or among whom it is possible to create a demand.

Let us say that there are in a community only 1,000 individuals who can buy automobiles, or who, under any circumstances, will ever buy a car. Let us say that two publications circulate in the community. One of them has 1,000 circulation and is read with attention by the 1,000 automobile users, or possible users. The other has a circulation of 1,000,000 and is read by only 100 of the car users or possible car users. Now the selling power of an auto advertisement in the first paper would be just ten times as high as the selling power of the same advertisement in the second paper. Here we see that a circulation of 1,000 is ten times more powerful as a seller than a circulation of 1,000,000, or a circulation 1,000 times as large.

That is what I mean by specificity. Therefore,

*The selling power of an advertisement varies with the specificity of the medium.*

But it varies not alone with the specificity of the medium. It varies also with the *radius of the circulation of the medium among the individuals whom the advertiser desires to reach.*

That is what I mean by specific circulation.

The specific circulation of the paper first above mentioned is *all the circulation it has*. It is only 1,000, but it is absolutely limited to the 1,000 automobile users. The radius of its specific circulation for the automobile advertiser is therefore 1,000. On the contrary, for the automobile advertiser, the

radius of the specific circulation of the second paper is not 1,000,000 — but 100. By the radius of specific circulation, therefore, I mean the length of the radius (in numbers) to which the medium reaches when that number is *limited to the specific people in whose hands the advertiser desires to place his goods, or in whose hands it is possible to place his goods.* Therefore,

*The selling power of an advertisement varies with the radius of the specific circulation of the medium.*

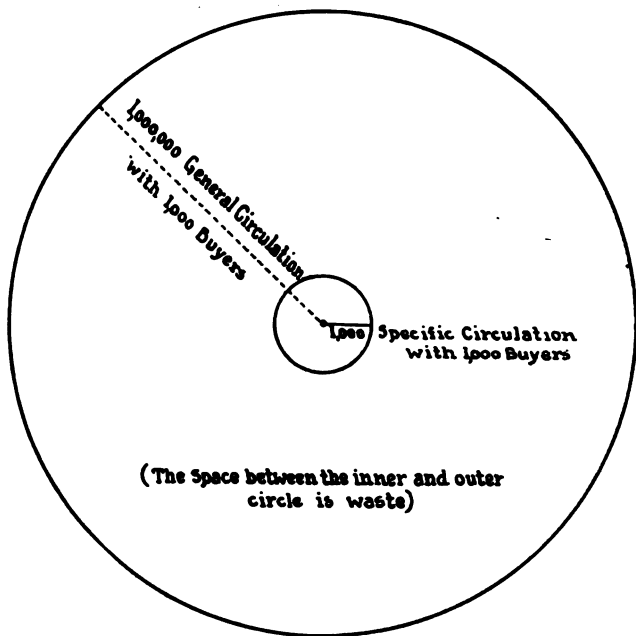
We can formulate another law of even more vital importance to the advertiser than the above. From the foregoing facts we can say with positive conviction:

*The waste of money in space advertising varies with the radius of the general circulation of the medium.*

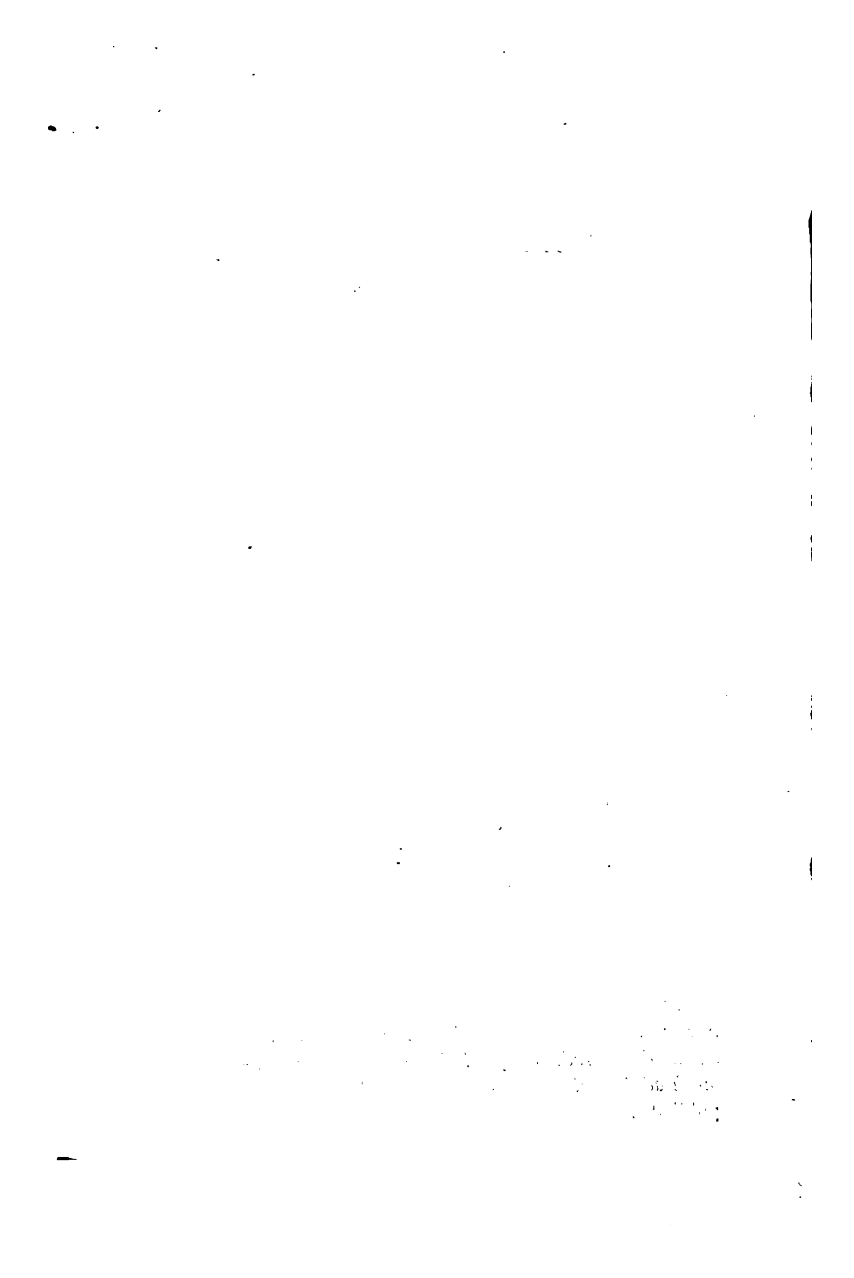
Observe, now, that there are two kinds of circulation — specific and general, the latter being sometimes inclusive of the former. A class paper, or a trade paper, has a circulation limited to only a few kinds of individuals. It has no *general* circulation at all. All other publications have a general circulation; and the more general the circulation the greater is the waste, when in turn the waste is figured not only on the kind but on the radius (the number) of the circulation also.

Indeed, the very fact that a publication has an enormous circulation is good ground for instant alarm and for extreme caution — when merely large

## GRAPHIC CHART SHOWING THE WASTE IN GENERAL CIRCULATION



The short radius in black line represents the total selling power of the 1,000,000 of circulation. *Each additional 1,000 on the dotted radius beyond the smaller circle means just that much additional waste, when a general circulation is used for publicity.*





circulation is urged as an excellent reason for the using of a medium. Where the circulation of a publication is general, when the medium is not a trade or a class publication, when its circulation is not actively self-limiting and restricted to a very distinctly marked and specific *kind* of readers, our law above would mean that *every additional thousand of circulation meant so much the more waste of money where the medium is used*. Advertisers who have been bludgeoned and bled by the club of large circulation have been dissipating their resources to the four winds and the seven seas, and I often wonder whether they will ever wake up from their dream, or rather whether they will ever come out of the stupor into which the continuous bludgeoning of circulation has battered them.

I am grinding no axes whatever. I have none to grind. In the economics of business I stand for conservation. If business men are paying out vast sums of money for benefits they do not and cannot get, and incidentally fattening the bank accounts of high-living advertising agents and their allies, the publishers, it is no fault of mine. I have worked out the laws of advertising for the purpose of *finding out the facts* in the forces at work, not for the purpose of bolstering either the publisher or his customer, the advertiser. If the facts are against the one or the other the facts alone are to blame.

Let an advertiser find out what is the *total selling*

*power* of the circulation before he pays the rates. Is he sure that the medium reaches the individual to whom he can sell his goods, and how many such individuals does it reach? Having established these data, he can then advertise with his eyes open, certain at least that he is not literally throwing his money away.

(It should be remarked here that the selfsame arguments that apply to journals and newspapers apply with equal force to billboards and all other outdoor signs, and to all indoor signs likewise. The *circulation* of an outdoor or indoor sign consists of the people who see it.)

From the analysis of the selling power of space advertising worked out in the present chapter, it should be clear to the advertiser that the special journal is the most specific medium one can use when the avoiding of waste is the desideratum. And the higher the specificity of the medium the better. With this kind of medium there is no waste whatever, because all of the circulation is specific and self-limiting to actual buyers only. The larger the circulation in a case of this kind, the higher will be the selling power. But whenever a medium is read by a general public,—no matter what kind of a publication the medium may be: whether it claims to be used by rich, poor or middling; whether it stands for labor or capital; whether it assumes to be the organ of the 400 or the organ of the slums; wheth-

er it stands for Wall Street or Socialism; whether it appeals especially to men, or especially to women, or especially to children,—only so long as it is read by a general public, let the advertiser beware of its representations and carefully sift its claims, balancing the suitability of his wares with the radius of its specific circulation. How many persons who read the medium are in want of my particular goods? How many thousands of the circulation will be waste? And how many of its advertisers are throwing their money away?

## Chapter X

### THE LAW OF REPETITION AND APPEAL

*The selling power of publicity varies with the frequency of its repetition and the frequency of change in the form of its appeal.*

In this law there is also compounded the idea of the *duration* of the mental effect of the publicity upon the buyer; for, of course, publicity that has no effect in making sales is out of the count — it is not publicity at all. When I speak of publicity, therefore, I mean publicity that appeals to *buyers* — not advertising which accomplishes no result but the getting of what is called “public attention.”

What now is the intimate relation of the duration, or the lastingness, of the mental effect with the frequency of the repetition of the publicity?

To use an extreme type of illustration, let us consider two advertisements, one very high in attention and suasion value, and issued but once, or *seen* but once in a year and then promptly withdrawn; and another of less striking attention and suasion value, but repeated as frequently as possible throughout the year. It should be clear that although the first advertisement — be it of the space kind, or the

specialty kind, or the premium kind — would be a more powerful seller of goods *for a limited time* than the other advertisement, the *total sales made by the more frequently repeated publicity would be far greater*. This fact is unquestionable and fundamental — else we would be compelled to admit that publicity of any kind has no selling value at all. This illustration assumes that one of the advertisements — the unrepeated one — is many, many times more powerful as a seller than the repeated one — *other things equal*. That is to say, the repeated advertisement gathers its tremendously greater selling power simply *because* of its repetition, and of nothing else. If we imagine that the unrepeated advertisement be given the same chance as the other, that is, if it be repeated as often as the other, it would be correspondingly greater in its selling power. We can therefore see the mathematical force of the first part of the law stated at the head of the chapter — namely,

*The selling power of publicity varies with the frequency of its repetition.*

Now, this is only another way of saying that the selling power varies with the *duration* of the effect on the mind of the buyer, or that

*The duration of the effect of publicity on the mind of buyers varies with the frequency of its repetition.*

From the above laws we are compelled to draw the conclusion that publicity is effective in its selling

power according as it is repeated or not. The more frequent the repetition of an advertisement the greater will be the sales; and ample experience has proved the force of this broad generalization. The value of billboard, novelty, and premium publicity is so very high just because the advertisement is constantly before the eyes of the buyer. Therefore it would appear that, except in solitary cases here and there, there can be no "diminishing return" from publicity that is not naturally unproductive. Let the business man who advertises remember always that he works in a world where *competition of the most deadly, uncompromising kind rules supreme*; that against every effort he puts forth there are unseen, ever-present, and incalculable counterforces at work; that the very moment he withdraws an ounce of his steam, fifty competitors, who always keep their steam at full head, shoot on in front of him. When he works on the theory that he draws a "diminishing return" from constantly repeated publicity in the same medium he is playing with double-edged tools, and will inevitably cut his fingers. In a word, he is bucking against a mathematical law the force and truth of which are clear to the business instincts of the wide-awake concern which *knows from experience* the facts I have here analyzed and thrown into formulæ of business economics. *Publicity of the right kind in the right place at the right time is never wasted.* It is only

publicity designed and placed by the *fool engineer*, or by the crafty promoter, who cares less for results than he does for his commission, which operates at a loss. And the prime purpose of this book is to correct abuse and save waste in publicity of *every* kind.

We have now to consider the second part of the law stated at our chapter head, that is, that the selling power of publicity varies with the freshness, the novelty, the frequency of change, in the *form* of the appeal. Again it matters not what form the publicity may take; whether it be space advertising, specialty advertising, or advertising in the form of premiums given away with goods. The selling power of the publicity, or of the scheme of publicity, will vary up and down with the freshness or change in the form of appeal.

From this law there is indicated the folly in sticking year after year to the same appeal. The very sameness of the appeal might indeed be regarded as a cause of diminishing returns for the few unfortunate advertisers that think they have found them. Even the great Barnum varied his appeal year after year, although he often recurred to an old appeal that had had a big run. "Wait for Barnum!" was varied with "Wait for the Big Show!" "Barnum is Coming!" "Barnum is Here!" The *idea* was always the same — the excellence of Barnum's show compared with all others — but the *form* of appeal was shifted.

The well-known brand of soap whose publicity tells us "it floats" would therefore do well were it to vary the appeal by calling attention to its other qualities, while still maintaining the "float idea" at par. Thus if the float idea has been inalienably and inextricably fastened up with the name of the soap, and with the soap itself, the "float idea" will always be suggested whenever the name is mentioned. So that an "ad" reading, "Ivory Soap — it lasts" will also convey the idea that "it floats" too; just as "Barnum is Coming!" means absolutely, without saying it, "Wait for him!"

The force of this change in the form of appeal is one of the absolute laws of the specialty advertiser, and above all of the premium user. Whenever a particular premium has had an excellent success as a trade getter, and has served to advertise a house better than a hundred times the same sum put in space advertising alone could advertise it, and has drawn business out of all proportion to the expense of the plan, the business concern, with natural human avidity, wishes to run its good fortune into the ground by hanging on to the same line of premiums. But experience has absolutely taught us that this policy is a mistake. A big success with any special premium means absolutely, *change the premium while the success is at its height*. Take off the successful premium, and put on a different one. Keep the interest of the buyers keyed up by changing the



tactics. Go back to the old line if necessary, later on, but *resist the temptation* to run success off the stage. For when it is mere repetition alone, the time comes when interest flags, and the "diminishing return" begins to show its head in the background.

Therefore, in our general law at the head of our chapter, I have been careful to qualify the formula as the facts warrant. The selling power of publicity varies with the frequency of its repetition. But it also varies with the freshness, with the newness, with the frequency of the change in the form of your appeal, when you would get out of your publicity all the selling power of which publicity is capable, *and save all the waste you can.*

## Chapter XI

### BUYING AND SELLING

*The selling power of publicity varies with the directness of its appeal to the individual who buys.*

Buying and selling are by no means the simple things they seem. They are, on the contrary, the most complex and difficult problems — if not the only ones — with which the political economist has to do; for it is a fact that labor is bought and sold in the market, and that it is, in its true economic meaning, a commodity. The buying and selling of labor are at the bottom of production, and therefore they determine the price of labor (wages), which in turn is the most important factor in the cost of production, and hence in the rate of profits. Likewise, buying and selling are ultimately the sole determinants of rent and interest. So that we can say, with a certain school of political economists, that the science of economics is really a study of “bargain and sale.”

A thing cannot be sold without being bought. You cannot think of a seller without at the same time thinking of a buyer. Nor can you think of a buyer without having in mind a seller of whom he buys. Sales imply purchases and purchases sales.

These things are what we call *correlatives* of each other.

On a further analysis of selling and buying it will appear that the two are in reality two aspects of essentially the same thing. Buying is a form of selling, and selling is a form of buying. The seller buys from the buyer, and the buyer sells to the seller — in one and the same transaction, at one and the same time. When a merchant sells goods to a customer, he buys the money of the customer, and the customer *sells* his money to the merchant. The fact is that the merchant merely *trades* his goods for those *other* goods which he ultimately buys with the money. The money is merely the middle man between the two parties, and the entire transaction is called by economists, *exchange*.

Now it must be remembered that the process of buying and selling is not a thing that occurs in some miraculous, preternatural manner. It is carried on by human agents. It is accomplished by intelligent conduct, or by the intelligent direction of conduct. In a word, it is done by *individuals*. No matter how complex or involved may be the causes which determine the action of the individual in the selection of the goods that are bought, or how manifold may be the preparations that lead up to, or the activities that follow from, the act, the *act of decision* itself — the decision that such and such goods will be *bought* at such and such a price, and the decision that they

will be *sold* under these conditions — is always the act of an individual.

This is a common, universal, psychic law in all human affairs, not only in buying and selling but in all things besides. The conduct of a crowd, or a mob, or the "public" is the sum of the conduct of individuals, all of whom have similar desires or motives. I include here the idea of *force*. In buying and selling, an individual is always *forced* to buy or sell, just as all individuals are forced to do everything else. And there is really no essential difference between the natural, psychic force, or self interest, which compels a buyer to prefer one brand of goods to another and the force which compels him to buy a monopoly product. One is a force resident in the nature of the buyer himself, the other is a force outside of him; but both are natural forces, quite as much as the flow of the tides.

The buyer may receive the goods directly from the seller on the spot, and carry them away on his person. Or buyer and seller may deal with each other indirectly, in the bargaining for and the delivery of the goods, through tens, hundreds, or thousands of intermediaries. Yet in all acts of selling and buying there is some one individual who decides on the goods to be bought, and some one individual who decides that the goods shall be sold under the conditions of the bargain. And it is to these individual buyers that publicity must appeal, if it is to succeed

in the purpose for which it is uttered — namely, the selling of goods. There is no such thing as a “buying public.”

Publicity therefore which wastes none of its appeal by “talking to the public”; publicity designed with conscious and intelligent precision, so that it is directed to the individuals who buy the goods it advertises; publicity *schemed and placed* in such a manner that it *takes the shortest route* — the direct route — to the heart and the mind of the individual who makes the decision to buy goods of the kind advertised — this kind of publicity is high in the directness of its appeal, and is therefore higher in its selling power than publicity in which any one of these factors is slurred or neglected — through ignorance or design. And the selling power of publicity of any kind is high or low as the directness of its appeal to the individual who buys is high or low. In the words of the law at the chapter head, the selling power of publicity varies with the directness of its appeal to the individual.

I cannot too strongly insist on this important fact, for it has a force and a meaning of no less significance for the man who invests his money in publicity than have the other laws developed in this book. It is a crying waste of money to advertise to a “public.” There *is* no public. The public is a figure of speech, an idea, a mere phrase which we use when we desire to speak of the collectivity of individuals.

There cannot be a "buying public" more than there can be a "selling public." The business man would laugh were you to speak to him of a "selling public." And yet he takes seriously the talk of the publicity promoter who writes "ads" for a "buying public." Business men buy things of course. But what business man ever figured on himself as "part of a buying public?" Oh, no, he only figures on a "buying public" when he figures the great horde of ultimate consumers. There is no *wholesale buying public*. And the advertising business man may just as well make up his mind now that there is no such thing, either, as a *retail buying public*. Buying at retail is done by individual buyers quite as much as buying at wholesale. And what is more, no retail buyer ever figures himself as *part of the public*.

In the mind of each and every one of the individuals whose collectivity is called "the public," "the public" consists of everybody else. When you are short-changed by a theatrical ticket seller, or insulted by a railway employee, you never think of the outrage perpetrated on the public. You think of the outrage perpetrated on yourself. You never think of the public at all. The truth is you do not care whether the public is outraged or not. You care for yourself. And the same thing happens to every individual who sees an advertisement. He thinks of himself; and if you do not address him

directly he is not interested at all in your message.  
*Therefore,*

*Issue no publicity that is not directly addressed  
to an individual.*

## Chapter XII

### ACTUAL DETERMINANTS OF SALES.

*The activating elements that enter into the composition of suasion are derived from the peculiar character of the medium.*

Granted that an advertisement has a high value as a getter of attention, and a proportionate suasion value, what are the *activating* elements of the suasion? What is it that makes the buyer *active*? What are the forces, or the arguments, that ultimately appeal to the buyer? What are the actual determinants of sales?

The actual determinants of sales will depend upon the kind of medium used. Therefore, we can say that the actual determinants of the selling power of any advertisement can be classified with the classification of the medium. Let us take, for example, the various advertisements in a general space medium. The appeal to buyers here must necessarily be of a general kind. Only exceptionally can they be of a specific kind. I mean, for instance, that it would hardly pay to advertise goods to a trade in a daily paper, a popular magazine, or on billboards; and this is virtually never done. Now what are the elements that move the general buyer to action



when he is struck with an advertisement which (for him) has a prime attention value and a prime suasion value at the same time?

Again, we can say that the buyer to whom the general advertisement appeals has certain needs that are in themselves a general determinant of sales — a force that will drive him to purchase sooner or later. We may therefore say that the needs, or necessities, of buyers are one of the determinants. The others are self-suggesting. They may be the price of the goods, when quality does not figure; quality, where price does not figure (I mean where price is no object); but, as a general rule, price and quality *both*. Again they may be the taste or fancy of the buyer, when price and quality do not count in the transaction — when price and quality are otherwise satisfactory.

4To recapitulate: for space advertisement, when attention value is prime, the determinants of sales are the necessities of buyers, the price and the quality of the goods, and the taste and fancy of buyers. These are the elements of suasion.

Now a general "public" is really made up of many specific groups. We can classify these groups in several ways. One group may be classified as that which has an unlimited buying power; another as that which has an ample yet limited buying power: and a third as that which has a buying power limited to bare necessities of life, according to the standard

of living. The first group we call the rich, the second the middle class, and the third group we call the poor. How must the advertiser figure these three groups? Clearly, as *specific* groups, whose specific wants, as classified by buying power, he must bear in mind if he does not wish to throw his money away.

As a matter of fact, it is extremely doubtful whether the first group of buyers is ever in the slightest degree affected by advertising. I never knew of a very rich man or woman buying anything that was advertised, or at least buying anything *because* it was advertised. On the contrary, the very fact that the thing were advertised would kill it for this group. If the members of the group buy advertised things, or services, they do so because the thing is a monopoly, and they are compelled to buy it or go without. Advertising it, as we have seen elsewhere, may create a demand among this group, but even *that* is doubtful. When the group can do without the monopoly, it will undoubtedly do so — if the thing is vulgarized by advertising. This fact is due to the more deep-lying fact that the members of the first group limit themselves as much as possible to the use of rare, peculiar things, which are *exclusive* in their character. Did the fashionable bootmaker or dressmaker *advertise*, excepting in a *very peculiar manner*, he would lose his trade. Better not advertise at all, at least after the methods we are con-

sidering in this book. His best and most efficient advertising is the kind for which he pays nothing. He must advertise without *fuss* — as for example if the king or queen patronize him. For him, *privacy* not *publicity* is the keynote. The first group, therefore, can be thrown out of a consideration of the determinants of sales. The publicity practiced by the noted dressmakers of Paris in sending out living models through the streets is not so much an advertising device as it is a tryout of public taste or fancy. These concerns have more trade than they want — of certain kinds. They refuse trade when it is offered by persons whose trade they would sooner not have.

The second class of buyers — the middling rich — is more feasible. Exclusiveness here figures largely but is not dominant. The man who will not pay \$16 or \$20 for a pair of shoes, even though he can amply afford to do so, might be caught with an advertisement of a pair at \$8 or \$5. But this price would entirely *shut out the whole of the third class*. Here the specific wants of the second class would limit the specific circulation of the medium to those only who could, or would, pay that price. And in any general circulation such a specific circulation would be exceedingly small.

The third group of buyers — which goes to make up more than  $\frac{1}{10}$  or  $\frac{2}{1000}$  of any community — is therefore the group with which the general

advertiser is most concerned. *This great group consumes all but a small fraction of all the goods produced by industry.* If you cannot sell your goods to this group of buyers you are throwing your money away when you advertise in a general medium.

Therefore, the advertiser who uses a general medium with a large circulation should figure that if he is advertising an expensive article he is thoroughly wasting his money, and *the publicity will not pay for itself.* But with goods which the third group actually *can buy*, the determinants of sales are necessity, price *plus* quality, and taste and fancy. For you must remember that taste and fancy enter into the purchase of a dollar pair of brogans by a laborer, when the quality is good. So much for space publicity in general media.

In specific media, such as trade, class, or technical journals, the main determinant is the special need of buyers. But in these media the other determinants above considered figure also. The buying "public" in this case is not divisible into groups of varying purchasing power, except as far as *quantity-buying* is concerned, and this, of course, registers its influence upon publicity with unmistakable power. I shall treat specifically of this influence in another chapter. Price and quality, taste and fancy, here have their proper places also, the main ones of these being price and quality.

With specialty advertising the determinants above

considered may enter considerably into the psychology of sales, but here the medium has its own peculiarly powerful determinant, which is the good will and friendly disposition of the recipient. While the specialty carries in itself all that the space advertisement carries in the way of attention, suasion, and determinant, it carries also this extraordinary determinant, peculiar to itself — the good will and friendship of the recipient for the giver.

Likewise in the case of inducement publicity — of the premium as an advertising medium. The premium not only carries in itself all the determinants that are carried by space and specialty advertising, but also another that is peculiar to itself. This is the acquisition by the buyer of a thing *not paid for in the sale. The sale is determined by the free gift of the premium itself.* Otherwise the psychology of premium publicity, or, as we call it, inducement, is identical with that of the other kinds of publicity analyzed above.

## Chapter XIII

### PRODUCTIVE AND UNPRODUCTIVE ADVERTISING

*The selling power of publicity varies inversely with its attention power when attention-getting is made the sole purpose of the publicity.*

Publicity admits of several different classifications according to the method of classification used. It can be classified according to the *medium*, or according to the peculiar kind of *appeal* that is made, or according to other methods. Thus we have space and specialty advertising; premium, or inducement, advertising; the appeal to the intellect, and the appeal to the heart. Again we have *general* advertising, used to sell goods of a general character — commodities that are of common use; and *specific* advertising, used to sell goods of a specific character — goods that are bought to be sold again, or bought by persons in want of specially made things, such as surgical instruments, tradesmen's tools, machinery or trade supplies of any kind, the consumption of which is limited more or less to highly restricted markets. These various classifications I have considered in another chapter. Here I wish to consider another kind of classification which cuts through all

the classifications mentioned above, and reduces all publicity to *two* kinds. This method is that of classifying all publicity by the degree in which it accomplishes the end for which it is put out — namely, the purpose of making sales.

*The purpose of all publicity is to sell goods.* Now, if we can establish a dividing line between a form of publicity that accomplishes this purpose and one that does not, it would appear that we have hit upon a fact of the highest importance for the man who is investing his money in advertising as a means of making sales; investing in advertising as a getter of business. In such a classification, the publicity which succeeds in selling goods can be called Productive Advertising; that is, advertising productive of sales; and publicity which fails as a sales maker can be called appropriately, Unproductive Advertising.

How can these two classes of advertising be distinguished one from the other? To answer this question it is necessary to analyze the elements of publicity and to ask, What is it that makes advertising pay?

One of the most important elements in any advertisement, of an advertising scheme of any kind, is the power of the publicity, when it is finally uttered, of attracting to itself the attention of the individual who buys the goods. This law may be regarded as *fundamental*. But it by no means follows that the

advertisement which attracts the most attention will necessarily be the one that sells the most goods. Far from it. On the very contrary, mere attention-getting, unless it is properly qualified by elements of selling power wholly different from itself, may result in the very opposite effect. It may result, when carried too far, in preventing the individual buyer from buying the goods at all, by so engrossing his mind with ideas other than those of buying that the primary purpose of the publicity — to sell goods — is wholly forgotten.

Countless millions of money have been swallowed up in this kind of publicity by careless or shallow-thinking advertisers and their crafty advisers. Perhaps the oldest device of bare and empty attention-getting is one so familiar to the American public that the American public no longer pays any attention to it at all. This method is to consume vast space in newspapers, magazines, and outdoor media by some mysterious word or sign, or other device, which, after months of repetition, is supposed to excite the public mind into a fury or frenzy of curiosity. Then, lo and behold! the mystery is one day cleared up by adding to the mysterious sign some such flat sentence as, "Eat Robinson's Crackers."

When this device was first used, it succeeded in exciting public curiosity to a moderately high pitch. But then, when the reaction came, and it was found



that the mystery was only a clever trick of advertising, public interest, by a natural and inevitable psychological law, fell just as far as it had been previously lifted, and no further attention was paid either to the signs or the goods they advertised. The advertisers had forgotten the law that *action and reaction are equal and opposite*; that the higher the pitch of curiosity the signs aroused, the lower would fall the interest in the whole scheme, including the product to be sold, when the mystery was finally cleared up!

Here is an example of attention-getting so powerful that it defeats the very purpose for which it is devised — to sell goods. True, it may be that the designers of this method of publicity had no special regard to selling the goods at all; that their only purpose was to attract attention. In that case the advertisement would have been a masterpiece. Otherwise it were a flat failure. It were better to spend all the money in using from the very start the device finally adopted: "Eat Robinson's Crackers." This plain, honest appeal would not only have saved the money wasted on the mysterious signs, but would at least have made Robinson's crackers a well known product — a result which the mystery method absolutely failed to do.

Now advertising of this kind — that is, the kind which succeeds only in attracting attention and in making no sales whatever — is what I will here call

Unproductive Advertising. For it should be clear that if the sales made are so insignificant as not even to pay for the publicity itself, why then they are to be counted as no sales whatever. The publicity has been *unproductive*.

I have taken the mysterious sign advertisement as a type of unproductive publicity, because the psychological law, the operation of which nullifies the selling power of such high value attention-getters, is very plain and easily seen.

The law involved here would seem to be that the higher the attention-getting power of an advertisement, the lower will be its selling power, when attention is the main purpose of the publicity. In other words, *the selling power of publicity varies inversely with its attention value when attention is the sole consideration*. The more attention that is attracted the lower the selling power. The less attention that is attracted the higher the selling power. Thus the sign "Eat Robinson's Crackers," while having a much lower attention value than a mysterious legend in which no commodity at all is mentioned, is infinitely higher in its power of selling the goods.

But these exaggerated types only go to prove that there are less exaggerated types of the same thing. In the mysterious signs, attention is the total value of the publicity. There is no selling value at all. But in other publicity you will find

that the deviser of the publicity has figured in the attention value as  $\frac{22}{100}$ , or other absurd proportion, of the total. And in just so far as attention only is figured, will the publicity be unproductive — totally unproductive, or, what is worse, an inspiration of disgust for both goods and seller; or comparatively unproductive; that is, unproductive of sales as compared with publicity in which selling power has not been sacrificed in undue proportion to the purpose of winning attention.

We may therefore classify advertising as being of two broad genera: (1) Productive and (2) unproductive. The latter is advertising which attracts to itself the attention of the individual but makes no sales, or virtually no sales, when compared with publicity of the former class — productive advertising. Productive advertising is advertising that not only attracts attention to itself but results in sales, which is the only result for which publicity of any kind can be rationally issued. Further analysis in which we will consider the elements that go to make up productive advertising, and the art of devising and framing productive publicity, will be taken up in its proper place.

## Chapter XIV

### THE LAW OF INCREASING RETURNS: OR THE EQUILIBRIUM OF PUBLICITY AND DEMAND

*When a given publicity appealing to a given buying power is constantly maintained, sales increase until publicity and demand are in equilibrium.*

When productive publicity of a given attention value and of a given suasion value is repeated at given intervals, or constantly reaches a given number of productive individuals, the sales resulting from the publicity will increase until all buyers are persuaded. When this point has been reached, the increase of returns *ceases*, but that does not mean that they decrease from that point as long as the given publicity is maintained. As long as the publicity is held at the same level, the sales are held at the same level. In other words *there is no diminishing return from constantly maintained publicity.*

This law is, of course, involved with the character of the goods — a subject of vast importance, which I will treat in its proper place.

The folly of drawing sweeping conclusions from insufficient data is the hall mark of the unscientific thinker. If you will read the chapter on the “con-

trol experiment" in my book, "The Premium System of Forcing Sales," you will find described there an experiment made by the American Tobacco Co. on the relative selling power of space advertising and premiums. This experiment was made with scientific precision, and the conclusion was absolutely certain. The only difference between scientific conclusions and unscientific ones is that a scientific conclusion is *carefully safeguarded*, while the unscientific one is not.

Conclusions based on insufficient data are highly misleading. For instance, it is a positive fact that the *average* number of male and female children born to a mated pair is equal. The *average* family consists *equally* of male and female children. Were a man to conclude that the average in the whole country consists of six boys and one girl, just because that was the average of the families in his own street, he would not be a reliable thinker, to say no worse of him. But this is precisely the method followed by certain self-styled advertising authorities, who claim that there is a diminishing return from publicity in general just because they found it so in one or two isolated cases.

The experience of the largest and most successful advertisers is to the very contrary. There is always an increasing return with each additional "dose" of publicity up to a certain point. This level is maintained as long as the publicity is maintained, and

further advertising cannot lift it. Further increase of publicity at this point becomes *unproductive*.

But why? Why cannot further publicity lift the selling power? What is the force that stops the increase of returns, and fixes the returns at this unvarying level, beyond which no amount whatever of increased publicity can lift them? There can be only one answer to the question. The increase in the returns comes to a stop *because all buyers whom the publicity reaches have been persuaded*. In other words, an equilibrium has been established between the selling power of the publicity and the demand for the goods. Further publicity of course cannot bring further increase. When by increase of publicity the sales have been lifted to higher and higher levels, a time comes when increased publicity is waste, and that time is coincident with the absorption of all the buying power in the market. The buying power of the market has been satisfied, or saturated.

In the ordinary course of its affairs, a growing business concern will not maintain a given quantity of publicity. As sales increase, the publicity will naturally be extended; appropriations will be increased. A growing concern does not wait for a given amount of publicity to reach its equilibrium with sales; that is, the saturation point. On the contrary it *adds* to its publicity continuously. It puts into its publicity additional "dose" after "dose" of publicity just

as long as each additional dose brings additional net volume.

Now the big importance for the business man in this law of increasing returns lies in the fact that very few advertisers in the country have sufficient resources to push the level of their publicity up to the plane where it is in equilibrium with demand. Very few have sufficient funds to drive publicity to this high limit, and it is only the great national advertiser, or the very rich local advertiser, who has been able to prove by actual experiment the truth of this law of publicity, which theory itself tells us must be true, even without experiment of any kind.

But this very fact itself — that only a very rich advertiser can test the law experimentally — means that the smaller advertiser with a limited appropriation is *dead safe in using publicity to his limit capacity*; and he is safe just because it is probable *he will never reach the level* at which the increasing return stops. He can be measurably sure that if his publicity be well devised and properly placed, where as little of it as possible will go to waste, his results will increase right along, and have an indefinite margin for future increase — *if he maintains a right ratio of increase in publicity continuously*. I say increase of publicity, meaning increase of steam power in the form of appropriations, not, of course, in the same identical advertisements. These should

be changed according to our law of repetition and appeal.

Thus with his publicity at its full head of efficiency in its attention value, its suasion value, its frequency of repetition, its change in the form of appeal, and in the other elements that are absolutely necessary for the maintenance of *selling power* at its highest level, the advertiser of comparatively small means can *look forward to an increasing return without end*. And this has been the actual experience of thousands of business concerns and business men who have built up considerable fortunes by the careful use of publicity. This, too, be it remembered, of publicity in space, in specialty, and in premium.

For the average business concern whom publicity can build up, the road of success is much the same as the ascent of a mountain whose summit is never reached. "Higher" is the only word that can describe a process of this kind.

So, while it is true that increasing returns from publicity cease when publicity has *satisfied* the total demand, they do *not* cease until that equilibrium has been reached. And that equilibrium, in the case of all but a few users of publicity, is never reached at all.



## Chapter XV

### THE SELLING POWER OF SPECIALTIES

*The selling power of specialties varies with the frequency of their use by the recipient and the permanence of their value in use.*

Political economy distinguishes two kinds of value — value in use and value in exchange. I should say, rather, that political economy customarily recognizes but *one* kind of value — that is, value in exchange. Whenever an economist speaks of value, he invariably means *value in exchange*, and is always so understood. But, at the same time, he is conscious, or at least sub-conscious, that value in use, while it may not be related at all to value in exchange, is still an important fact of economic science. A thing may have a very high value in exchange and a low value in use — a diamond, for example. Contrariwise, a thing may have the minimum value in exchange — say bread, for example — and yet have an excessive value in use. When I speak, therefore, of the value in use of specialties, I mean the extent to which they are used — the frequency of their use, or their recurrent usability. A specialty that is used frequently, say ten times a day, has a higher value in use than one which is used but

once a day. A specialty that is *seen* ten times a day has a higher value in use than one which is seen but once a month or once a year. In a word, frequency of use and permanent value, recurrence and constancy, here mean precisely *frequency of repetition* as applied to publicity of all kinds.

Each time an individual sees or handles an advertising specialty, the advertisement is *repeated* for him. And theoretically the selling power of such a specialty would naturally be high, according to the number of repetitions, or times of seeing or using the specialty in question. The more frequently it is seen or handled, the higher the selling power; the less frequently, the lower the selling power.

This law, however, is subject to unification with the law of *change in the form of appeal*. Repetition must be reinforced by freshness, by change, in the form of new and different kinds of specialties.

It is evident that here recurrence and constancy mean one and the same thing; but a difference can be distinguished, if we distinguish between the specialty built for use and the specialty built for ornament. When we hang a picture on our wall, or set up a vase on the mantle, we may be said to be *using* these objects each time we enjoy the sight of them. And yet in ordinary conversation and commonplace definition, neither the picture nor the vase is called a thing of utility. No such distinction, however, is made by political economy, and

no such distinction logically and truly exists. When we look at a work of art, we are *using* that object (for the economist) quite as much as we are *using* a calendar when we consult it. An art calendar will serve as a vivid illustration of a thing which is at once an object of utility and beauty both.

The object of beauty, therefore, may be said to have a constancy and recurrence of value in use, quite as much as a corkscrew, a pocketknife, or any other of the infinite variety of things used as specialties. The art calendar, or art advertisement of other kind, may be an object of utility and beauty both. But the selling power will depend upon the recurrence of their use or the constancy of the value. A specialty may be quickly worn out and thrown away. Its selling power should be correspondingly low unless it be re-supplied; in which case the repetition of the publicity consists in the reduplication of the specialty itself, or better yet a new kind of specialty bearing the advertiser's hall mark, or special attention-getting idea that he uses in his publicity.

Of course, we recognize here that the specialty has its own peculiar *kind of appeal*. We are mindful of the fact that the specialty appeals to the good will and gratitude of the recipient, and that its selling power is largely due to this powerful element, which is unique with the specialty. But we are not here discussing the *kind of suasion* the specialty carries,

as much as we are discussing the manner and method in which the suasion of the specialty works. Given the suasion (and this is always understood) the selling power will be proportional to the frequency or recurrence of the appeal, precisely as in all other forms of publicity. We are not discussing the kind of selling power the specialty has in it. We are discussing the regulation of the *quantity* of the selling power it has. And this quantity we find to be large or small, high or low, according to the law as formulated above.

## Chapter XVI

### THE SELLING POWER OF PREMIUMS

*The selling power of premium publicity varies with the value of the premium and the time required to win it.*

In the above law regulating the selling power of premiums we shall find compounded all the laws of publicity that apply to advertising in general, with the single exception of the publicity in which *space dimensions*, or the *amounts* of space used, are especially concerned. This fact proves beyond question that the premium is, in its very nature, a form of advertising. In my volume, "The Premium System of Forcing Sales," I stated that the premium is a form of advertising, and proved the truth of that assertion by arguments of comparison. Here we shall see that the fact is a matter of mathematical demonstration. All the laws that apply to space publicity apply with equal force to premium publicity, with the single exception of those that deal with the attention-getting values of large or small displays of space. And even this law will apply to the premium also when the object given as a premium is put on display.

A premium offered as a reward for the purchase

of goods is an advertisement whose attention-getting power, or attention value, is the highest conceivable. The attention of the *individual buyer*, of course, is meant here. The attention power of publicity is not *selling* power when the attention of individuals who are not buyers is attracted. You might attract infinite attention by an automobile advertisement, but your sales would be nothing if the individuals whose attention was attracted were unable to buy cars, or would not buy cars even were they able. When I speak of attention I mean attention of individual buyers — actual buyers, persons who buy the things advertised; and in this category, of course, I include what are called prospects. All persons who have the necessary buying power and who, for any reason, cannot be persuaded to buy pianos, are not piano buyers. All others who have the buying power are. Now it is the attention of these latter that is desired—the buyers.

The attention value of the premium (with this kind of individuals) naturally is higher than could possibly be the attention value of any other form of publicity. An offer to give something for nothing will attract the attention of *everybody*, and will hold it until the individual *has found out the value* of the thing offered. When the individual has satisfied himself about the value he forms his judgment as to whether he will or will not accept the gift with its conditions, or accept the gift without conditions, if

none are imposed. But the point I wish to drive home is that the premium, as a free gift, is the highest possible form of attracting and holding the attention of individual buyers.

Now as to the suasion value of premium publicity; or its power of persuading the individual to prefer the goods which carry as an advertisement the premium itself.

The premium system of merchandising is called the "inducement system," the "inducement method," or other similar term, and the word "inducement" has been, by usage, well tied up with premiums. Now *inducement* means nothing at all if it does not mean *suasion*. Indeed, *suasion by gift*, or by bribe, or by the something-for-nothing, good-measure, reward, or prize method, is the oldest and most powerful form of suasion, if we exempt the big stick, or hold-up method, which is suasion true enough, but crude, not refined, suasion. The gift method is an appeal to the self-interest of the individual to do something which the giver desires him to do. Therefore the giving of something for nothing (meaning nothing in the direct form of goods or gifts in exchange) is the highest possible degree of suasion, because it is a plain, open, above-board, direct appeal to the self-interest of the individual, and not an indirect or hidden one, that has to be "suggested."

Publicity suasion, to be effective, must be an

appeal to the self-interest of the individual buyer, and the more obvious and direct the appeal is, the higher will be the suasion. The easier it is for the individual to see that it is to his self-interest to prefer certain goods above others — the plainer and more obvious it is to him that he will get a benefit from the purchase of certain goods that he will not get with the purchase of others — the more powerful will be the lever under him moving him to the act of buying.

Now the premium is the most vivid, obvious, plain, striking, easily seen and appreciated, easily understood and assimilated argument to the individual's self-interest of all forms of suasion publicity you can imagine. All other forms are comparatively obscure. All other forms are a draft on the individual's thinking power. All other forms of suasion require the individual to *think*, to reason things out, to travel from cause to effect, to *imagine* a lot of things, before he is thoroughly convinced. *The premium is like putting a piece of money in his hand.* No thought is required in that case. The suasion is automatic — self-acting.

Hadrian, the old Roman Emperor, had a saying, "The smell of every kind of cash is good." People will take things for nothing, no matter how insignificant the thing may be. But have you ever realized how very few things are given for nothing? Have you ever gone out on a still hunt and *tried* to



get people to give you something for the pure love of man? Have you ever made it your business to make careful notes of the number of people in your immediate family, to say nothing of strangers, who have sought you out for the sole purpose of making you valuable presents during any ninety days of the year? The truth is that the tremendous success of the premium system is due most largely to the fact that "nothing for nothing" — not something for nothing — is an iron-clad rule of our most christian civilization. Nobody scatters his gifts around regardless of whom they may fall upon. And if the premium system has proved an amazing success, it is only because it is, in a way, a real approach toward that best form of business — the form which returns the gift to the giver increased a thousandfold. The premium system is the highest form of suasion, and is the most profitable business device, because it is a concrete realization of that dream of the political economist, *the greatest good for all is the greatest good for each.*

What is it, now, that determines the attention value and the suasion value of the premium? For if we can hit upon that, we shall be at the heart of the selling power of the premium. This should be plain to all. If the selling power of publicity varies with its attention value and its suasion, the selling power of the premium must operate under the same law if the premium is a form of publicity — it must

vary with its attention value and its suasion. What determines the attention power, what determines the suasion power of any particular premium? In a word, on what does the *selling power* of the premium depend?

We can answer all these questions in one word: *Value*. The value of the premium determines its attention power and its suasion. We may say that

*The attention power and the suasion power of a premium vary with its value.*

Here we see that, as in certain other publicity devices, attention and suasion are *identical things*. When premiums are the form of the publicity, attention and suasion *must* be identical because the premium — a concrete something — becomes the actual embodiment of both. The higher the value of the premium, the higher will be its attention and suasion power. The lower the value of the premium, the lower will be its attention and suasion power.

Thus far we see that the premium as a form of publicity, or rather as one of the media of publicity, is bound by the same general laws which bind publicity in all other kinds of media. But I have laid down the principle, in my "Premium System of Forcing Sales," that the "premium is the imperial device of modern advertising methods"; I have shown how it is, in very nature, unique among publicity media and methods; and that it is thus

unique because it is the only form of publicity that commutes publicity into sales. And in this very uniqueness of the premium among advertising devices to speed up the mechanism of trade, will be found an element of selling power that applies only to the premium, and to no other form of publicity whatever. This element is that of *time*, or quantity of purchases, which the premium itself enforces.

If the time required to win the premium be short, its selling power will be high; if long, the selling power will be low. Thus,

*The selling power of the premium varies with the time required to win it.*

But this law is only a part of the entire law stated at our chapter head. The selling power varies not only with the time required to win the premium but with the value of the premium itself.

The time is influenced by the value, the value by the time, and the selling power by the product of these two when taken into each other. We can say therefore, in mathematical terms, that the selling power of a premium is a *function* of its value and its time. And this statement is only the mathematical way of stating the law of the selling power of premiums with which we began the text of the chapter as above.

Likewise the selling power of premiums, as of other forms of publicity, will vary with the radius of the

specific circulation of the premium offer; that is, with the *number of individual buyers* of goods with which the premium is offered whose *attention is attracted* by the fact that premiums are offered. These individuals, or rather the number of these individuals, are the *circulation* of the premium offer. They are, too, its *specific* circulation. I mean by the specific circulation of the premium offer the number of individuals who are in need of the goods and who have the necessary buying power. The larger the number of these individuals reached by the premium offer, the larger will be the sales. The method of increasing the premium offer circulation differs with different premium users. Some use space publicity in all its forms to make circulation. Others use outdoor or indoor sign specialties. Others use advertising novelties. Others use nothing but the premium itself. But the method of building the circulation of the premium offer is indifferent. Given the circulation, the premium will follow its own particular laws of selling power as above outlined. The selling power varies with the specific circulation of the medium, even when no general medium is used to back up the premium medium — when the only medium used is the premium itself.

Likewise, the selling power of the premium varies *inversely* with its attention-getting power when attention-getting is the sole consideration in the premium offer. That is, the more attention attract-

ed the less goods are sold. The self-destructive nature of this kind of premium giving is seen exemplified in those foolish business houses that offer an automobile or a piano under conditions that make the winning of the prize impossible. The more attention such a house attracts by such an offer, the less goods it sells. The individual buyer, too, soon realizes that such a house is trying to play a confidence game upon him and probably withdraws all his trade in favor of some more honest concern.

Likewise the selling power of premiums, as the selling power of other forms of advertising, varies with the frequency of the change in the *form* of appeal; that is, with the frequency of the change of the articles, or merchandise, offered as premiums. It is one of the infallible rules of the premium system never to allow the interest of buyers to lag from the monotony of running the same premium offer into the ground because of its success.

Thus we see that if we can analyze the art of advertising into certain separable elements, such as attention value, and suasion value; and can further analyze these into more ultimate elements still; and can then recombine these ultimate elements in a synthesis; and in that synthesis can reduce them to several mathematical laws, susceptible of mathematical demonstration; and if at the same time we find that the premium system of trade-getting naturally falls into the same classifications, and

is naturally subject to the self-same laws, we are bound to conclude that it must belong to the self-same order and system of facts. This system of facts is publicity, or advertising to increase custom; and in that system we find that the premium has the highest position in power.

## Chapter XVII

### THE LAW OF VARIETY IN MEDIA.

*The selling power of publicity is proportional to the variety of the media used.*

This general law of selling power includes in one common sweep all the general laws of publicity developed in the foregoing chapters. It is also qualified and modified by all of these laws. And as all our laws are involved with one another, each having a bearing on all, and all on each, whenever we study the practical application of any one law, we must bear in mind the effect which all the other laws will have upon its operation when it is set going. Therefore, when I say that the selling power of publicity will be high or low according as the advertiser uses few or many *different kinds of media*, I mean that all our other laws are adequately remembered in the act. By variety of media I do not mean the *number* of the same or similar media used; I mean the number of the *different kinds* of media used.

Generally speaking, there are three grand genera of media: space, specialties, and premiums. These three grand genera are divisible into several different species or varieties. Space may be the pages of a newspaper or magazine of any kind, outdoor or indoor

signs, catalogs, circulars, or other printed matter. Specialties may be any one of the several broad divisions which I have studied and classified in my book "Specialty Advertising," such as cloth, metal, celluloid, leather, wood, glass, paper, decalcomania, and so on; or they may be classified as useful articles and beautiful articles; or still again, as articles having a transitory value in use, and articles having a permanent value in use. Thus a given cloth medium may have a much more permanent value in use than another cloth medium, the same being true of two media in metal or paper. Again, specialty media vary among themselves in *frequency* of use, which is only another form of constancy, and constancy here means the same thing as *repetition* in space advertising.

With premiums, variety means simply the difference in the *kind* of articles or merchandise used as premiums. If you will glance over the advertising pages of The Novelty News or the premium catalog of any large premium house, you will see at a glance what I mean by variety in premium media. If you glance over the advertising pages of The Novelty News you will see what I mean by variety in both premiums and specialty media. And if you call to mind the various publications, such as newspapers, magazines, trade and special class journals, technical journals, billboards and other outdoor signs, you will understand what I mean by variety in space media.



Now I believe that any business man who is investing his money in publicity needs no argument to convince him that he will get better selling results if, instead of sticking to one particular kind of medium only (let us say he is using space), he distributes his publicity among as many different kinds of space media as he can—provided always that the media are productive. He must be guided by the irrefragable laws of publicity laid down in this book, or his money will go wrong. If he is a space user, let him select as many different kinds of *productive* space media as he can. Let him appeal to his trade through as many distinctly *different* channels as he can. I mean if billboards are useful, *use* them. If indoor signs (a form of space and special media both) are useful, use them. Use as many *different* kinds of space media, being careful to avoid the use of every kind that do *not* appeal to or reach your trade. It is far more productive, for example, to use magazines and billboards *both* than to use either of the two alone, when both have circulation among the individuals who buy the goods.

So also, if the advertiser is using specialty media, it is folly to stick to one single line, or a few lines of specialties, even when they have been found to be highly productive. Change your media often; use rotation of six or a dozen *different* specialties rather than one or two, even when you have identified your name and product with a certain specific

specialty or novelty. Bear in mind the law which says that selling power varies with the frequency of change in the *form* of the appeal. Change the form of your appeal by changing your specialty. And what is said here of the specialty applies with equal force to premiums. Changing the specialty, changing the premium, is precisely the same thing as changing the words, the design, the suasion element of a space advertisement. If the reader will study our chapter on the Law of Repetition and Appeal, he will see that that law is not meant exclusively for space publicity, but for publicity of every kind — space, specialty, and premium.

But there is a deeper significance and a higher importance in the law stated at the head of this chapter than those I have just pointed out. According to that law, the space user should use as many different kinds of productive space media as he can; the specialty user should use as many different kinds of specialties as he can; the premium user should change his premiums as often as he can. But the highest meaning of our law lies in the following absolute rule of successful publicity: The advertiser who would get out of publicity all the selling power of which publicity is capable *must* use the three grand forms of publicity which are the most absolutely different in kind; and these are space, specialties and premiums themselves.

Great as may be the difference among the various

space media, great as may be the difference among specialty and premium media in themselves, the difference of these three root-media is greater and higher still; and the law clearly indicates that the use of the highest possible variety in publicity is followed by the largest possible results. Selling power is proportional to the variety of the media used.

It is the silent, subtle, and all-powerful force of this absolute psychological law that accounts for so many of the gigantic failures and gigantic successes in various publicity campaigns which, for the most part, were incomprehensible mysteries to the concerns making the campaigns, and to the advertising "experts" who were designing and directing them. I know of business concerns that spent hundreds of thousands upon widespread attention and suasion splashes in space publicity, and who were standing by, helpless, watching their golden streams flowing into empty deserts of unproductive publicity. Then suddenly, as by an inspiration of despair, they cut their space away down, and put some of the surplus — only a comparatively small quantity of it, be it noted — into premiums and specialties, and more than doubled their sales within two years. The American Tobacco Co. under highly scientific conditions tested out the facts by adding premiums to brands that had been carried in the past only by space publicity, and saw these brands leap suddenly to the top of the column. Again this same company,

under similarly scientific conditions, took off premiums from a certain brand that had been a top-seller under premiums and space both and, leaving it under space alone, saw it reel and fall far below the brands that had so recently leaped ahead under the stimulus of the premium.

Let me ask, friends, what did it? What *law* was at the bottom of this miracle in results? The answer is clear in the formula with which I open the present chapter: *The selling power of publicity is proportional to the variety of the media used.* If you will consult my volume, "The Premium System of Forcing Sales," in the chapter on the "Control Experiment," you will find there the actual figures in the case, and there is no need of repeating them here.

Now this use of variety of media is in reality tied up inextricably with our law which says that the selling power of publicity varies with the frequency of the change in the form of the appeal. This increase of selling power is due to the unalterable law of the human mind and body that monotony kills. Monotony of diet will bring about as low a state of vitality and resistance to disease as variety of diet will do the opposite. The old proverb that variety is the spice of life is physiologically and psychologically true. Monotony of occupation kills ability. Variety of occupation enlivens and strengthens it. If you would maintain the ability of a salesman at its highest peak — send him into new territory as

often as you can. Never let a man get stale by keeping him on the same job too long. Never allow *yourself* to get stale by sticking too long at one hard job. You do not need rest and recreation so much as you need change of employment. Change of employment will work cures of mind and body when complete rest or complete recreation will kill you. It is not *work* that makes men stale and inefficient; it is the same kind of work repeated too long, and *too much* work of any kind. Don't ask a man to flatten himself out on the same job by monotony *plus* quantity of labor. And treat your publicity the same way. Don't let it get stale by keeping it on one job all the time. Give it some space, some specialties, some premiums. Vary the space by shifting it from one space medium to another of another kind. Put it on a billboard job, too. Put it on different *kinds* of specialties and different *kinds* of premiums. Or, best of all, put a reasonable *proportion* of it on all these media at one and the same time, just as the wise business man will shift his men about in new departments so as to keep alive their interest, stir up their minds with fresh points of view, and enable them to *live* in their work instead of vegetating on it. If you have ever tried to eat forty quails in forty days you will appreciate the absolute *need of change*, not only in diet, but also in publicity, and in all things else in the human process of living.

## Chapter XVIII

### THE LAW OF THE CONSUMPTION-LIMIT

*The selling power of publicity is limited by the consumption limit of the goods.*

The question has often been asked, can publicity force up natural demand? Can a normal demand for goods be increased by publicity? Can publicity force people to increase their normal consumption of a given product?

The answer to these questions is yes and no, and whether it shall be yes or no depends absolutely on the kind of goods that are advertised. A given demand for certain kinds of goods can be forced up by publicity to a point indefinitely high, depending altogether upon the buying power of the individual buyer. A given demand for certain other kinds of goods cannot be lifted a penny's worth by all the advertising imaginable.

I should say here, in parenthesis, that the popular notion that supply is regulated by demand is an economic delusion. The very reverse is the truth. Demand is regulated by supply. The larger the supply, the larger the demand, because the larger the supply, the cheaper will be the price, and the higher, therefore, the buying power. When a large

quantity of goods is thrown on the market the demand rises with the quantity, and with the fall in price. When the supply of a commodity is small, and the price high, the demand is correspondingly low. This viewpoint may be difficult for the person who is not accustomed to think in terms of economics but it is perfectly obvious and elementary to those who are.

Now for what kind of goods can publicity force up a given demand, or create a special demand where none exists? And what kind of goods are refractory in this respect? We may say as a general law that no amount or kind of publicity can possibly increase the demand for goods the consumption of which is limited by the very nature of the goods themselves. Bread, for example, is precisely that kind of goods. No human being will eat more bread than his appetite prompts him to eat — just because he sees bread advertised in a newspaper or on a billboard, or just because somebody offers him a premium to buy a certain brand. The advertisement, or the premium, may induce him to buy his normal quantity of bread from the advertiser or premium giver; but it can never induce him to stuff himself with bread for the sake of the publicity. No kind or quantity of publicity has ever increased the normal total demand for any kind of a product the consumption of which was self-limited — that is, the consumption of which was limited to a fixed quantity

by the very nature of the goods themselves. And this is true no matter how rich or foolish the individual buyer may be. No sentient creature — to say nothing of men — will encumber itself, or discommode itself, in order to do something which in its essence is painful. The individual who is worth a million will eat no more bread than a hod-carrier; on the contrary, less. Millionaires, as a rule, scarcely eat bread at all; especially when they move in the right social set. But let us assume our millionaire to be a newly rich one, who has not yet learned that to eat bread is not really fashionable. Let us imagine him spending all the money he can in every possible personal indulgence, bread among them; and he will eat no more and buy no more bread than the hod-carrier above mentioned. *The consumption of bread is self-limiting*, and the total demand for it cannot be increased by publicity, or by increasing the supply and reducing the price. If bread were sold at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents the loaf, the demand for it would be no greater than it is now at 5 cents. The goods are self-limiting in their consumption.

Now it is up to every advertiser to determine whether or not his product is of that kind, and to expect or not expect to increase a given demand by publicity accordingly. We may say, for example, that if the individual cannot be forced to buy more than his usual quantum of bread, he readily can be forced to buy an extra pair of shoes or so, and can



easily be forced to do it by the right kind of publicity. But be it observed that shoes are not *self-limiting* in their consumption, or say rather that the consumption of shoes is not self-limiting. The consumption of shoes, and a million other things, is absolutely unlimited. No need to argue about this if we bear in mind that one woman will fix her alimony at \$500 a year, and another at \$500,000 a year, and that others will come in at all grades between. One woman will spend \$25,000 a year for shoes *plus* other kinds of harness — another will spend \$50,000 a year, and another less than \$50 a year — for dress, for harness. Do not these figures absolutely prove that wearing apparel at least is unlimited as to quantity in consumption? The concerns that sell human harness of all kinds know this fact well.

But the truth of the opposite nature — the self-limiting character of other kinds of goods — is not so well known to those concerns that manufacture and distribute them. This is especially true of certain food products, and of certain slow-selling articles in which the selling power of publicity is absolutely limited to the *division* of the total trade that normally exists, or rather to the forcing of *preference* for one brand of goods over another. But with this, of course, we are not concerned here, having treated of nothing but that view of things in all but two or three of our preceding chapters. We

may therefore repeat that demand can be absolutely increased by publicity, and that the degree to which it can be increased will be limited only by the limit of the individual's buying power, where the goods are of the kind that are not self-limiting in their consumption.

The self-same logic applies to the creation of a demand where none exists. Demand for a *new kind* of product, not heretofore used in a community, can be created in such a community by publicity. But after it has been created, the selling power of the publicity will revert to our law herein before outlined. If the consumption of the goods is self-limiting, the publicity cannot force up the demand. If the consumption be unlimited, publicity can carry up the demand as high as the individual has capacity to buy.

## Chapter XIX

### THE LAW OF NECESSARIES

*The selling power of publicity varies with the degree in which the goods are necessities of life when the goods are sold in competition.*

If the goods advertised are an absolute necessary of life to all the individuals of a community, the selling power of publicity will be of the highest conceivable kind. The more necessary the goods, the higher will be the selling power — when all the elements of publicity, such as attention and suasion, circulation and specificity, and so on, are considered as being equal in all the publicity uttered. The less necessary the goods are, the lower will be the selling power.

Thus, publicity which advertises bread may be of a very low order of attention and suasion value, and yet will have a higher selling power than publicity which advertises biscuits, even though the attention and suasion elements of the latter publicity be much higher. Bread is much more necessary than biscuits. The same argument applies to all other necessities of life, such as food products of all kinds, wearing apparel, household furniture, and other things of the kind. And the more *active* the

commodity the higher will be the selling power. By active I mean a commodity that is used up rapidly, and is therefore bought and sold frequently — stuff having recurrent demand.

Thus it has been found that tremendous sales have been made in certain lines of foods and other commodities by widespread publicity, in which no attention whatever has been paid to suasion power — in which the mere fact is told that there exists, and can be bought, a certain, or any, brand of bread, tea or coffee, meat, soap or shoes. I do not mean by this that the sales would *not* have been larger if the publicity had been more efficiently devised and placed. I mean the reverse. The sales would have undoubtedly been larger under these conditions. I am merely trying to show to the reader the fact that the selling power varies with the necessariness of the goods — other things being equal, of course. Of two advertisements offering to sell bread, one may have a higher selling power than the other — of course. But both will have reaped a larger harvest than the most powerful publicity which advertises less necessary goods — say biscuits or pies. I shall presently recur to these facts. Here I wish to point out this law of publicity as a prime law to be considered in the devisement of every piece of publicity uttered.

## Chapter XX

### THE LAW OF ASSOCIATION

*The selling power of publicity varies with the association value of its attention and suasion power.*

"Selling by trademark," says Munn, the patent lawyer, "is one of the miracles of modern merchandising."

Let us see if we can find out why.

If, in any particular advertisement, there always recurs the same word, the same sign, the same design, or the same "idea," whether or not the idea be expressed in precisely the same symbol, or in different symbols that are readily associable, the advertisement will always be associated (in the mind of the beholder) with the particular brand of goods concerned. This power of association is not, be it observed, restricted to the identical sign, or identical *form* the idea takes. The power of association is in the *idea*, rather than the sign. For example, Ivory soap is always associated with the idea, "it floats." Whenever soap is mentioned and the idea of "floating" is involved Ivory soap at once comes into mind by the law of association.

Therefore the rival soap maker who would undertake to advertise his brand by making use of the

float idea would only succeed in advertising Ivory soap — not his own. Contrariwise the idea of floating is always associated with the word Ivory where soap is concerned. The word Ivory when applied to soap at once brings with it the idea of floating. "Ivory" and "floating" therefore are very high in their association value, quickly and easily calling into mind the special goods themselves.

Now the lower the association value in any device of publicity the lower will be the selling power of the publicity; and this law applies both to the attention device and the suasion device. The word Ivory applied to soap has an excellent attention value and suasion both. The color of ivory is a pleasing color for soap to have. It is descriptive of the goods and therefore suasive — an argument to buy the goods; an appreciation of the goods; and hence high in its power of calling into mind the soap itself. It is high in its association value. Once seen and understood, it is never forgotten, because the color of ivory is easily associated with the color of soap.

But let us suppose that the sign used to indicate the soap were not the word Ivory, but a device — say, of a cart-wheel with a crescent moon in the place of the hub. Such an advertisement would have a very low selling power compared with the Ivory publicity, because in order to associate soap with a cart-wheel and a crescent moon would require conscious and powerful mental effort on the

part of the beholder. He would have to "drag in" the "soap idea" by the heels. And it would be necessary that he should see the sign with the words "Crescent and Wheel Soap" tied up together, not once, but many many times, before the two ideas would become inseparably associated in his mind. And even then a certain amount of mental effort would be required to associate the sign and the soap together. Why? Because the association would be an *artificial*, not a *natural* one. A crescent moon is in no way associated, *in nature*, with soap. A cart-wheel is in no way associated, in nature, with soap. And association in nature, association of *facts*, are at the bottom of the association of *ideas*. It is association of ideas we are dealing with when we discuss the selling power of association in publicity. The color of ivory, or the property of floating, is natural in soap. They are associable in nature, and therefore are the more easily associable in idea.

A famous Scotch philosopher used to say that he could never hear church bells without thinking of the battle of Waterloo. Now church bells and the battle of Waterloo are not associated in nature, but they *were* so associated in nature for the Scotch philosopher. When he first heard of the defeat of Napoleon the neighboring church bells were pealing vigorously. The two *facts* were presented to him at one and the same time, and were therefore easily

associated in his mind. The same would be true had he seen a glaring picture of a cart-wheel and a crescent moon the first moment he had put his nose into a soap factory. But hardly otherwise.

All the above facts explain why some trademarks have cost their owners many millions of dollars in advertising appropriations, while others, equally well known, and even far more efficient as sellers, have cost a bare fraction of the price.

In Munn's little work on Trademarks, the lawyer speaks with considerable gusto and affluence about the "millions" which well known trademarks have cost their owners. He quotes authority to show that the trademark, "Royal Baking Powder," cost \$1,600,000 a letter, and that it is rivaled in cost by "Kodak," "Uneda," "Ivory," "Coca Cola," and the word "Gillette." (I wonder how much of this enormous cost went into the pockets of the lawyers in fighting long drawn out and innumerable cases of infringement!)

Now all of these, with the exception of "Ivory," were bought at many, many times the necessary cost (including the enormous legal charges), because they are names associable with the product they stand for only by a severe mental effort. Baking powder is never *naturally* associated with royalty, nor are cameras with the word "Kodak." Coca leaves and cola nuts are never naturally associated with beverages, Uneda with biscuits more than



with boots, or "Gillette" with anything for sale under the sun. I will venture the assertion that "Ivory Soap" was as well known a trademark after its first great national publicity campaign as it is today, and that if its repetition has cost its owners millions, the returns from its publicity have been far greater than the returns from the other trademarks mentioned — dollar for dollar of cost. Its selling power is higher than that of the others because its association value is greater, and it is thus greater because the ideas that it calls up and brings together are ideas of things that are naturally associated in fact, and are each high in the value of their suasion.

True, there is a *little* suasion in "Royal," as applied to any product — royal meaning of a high degree of eminence as compared with other products; and there are "Royal" brands of nearly everything. But there is no suasion in any of the other trademarks which Munn so gloriously touts as being "millionaire" signs. If they have a high selling power they have it because of association power in the attention value alone — not in the suasion power. It should surely be a self-evident truth that a trademark which has in it a high attention value and a high suasion value, and at the same time presents a picture in which the attention device and the suasion device are *both* quickly and naturally associated with the goods themselves, would have a

proportionately higher selling power, and would therefore cost infinitely less than a trademark deficient in all these respects. It is true that there is such a thing as just "making the people like it"—but it is a somewhat costly process.

The word Kodak has been incorporated into the English language by the widespread publicity which the Eastman Kodak company has used in its selling campaigns. But let us ask whether it was the word Kodak which caused these campaigns to be so highly successful. Why did the word Kodak become so well known? Did the word Kodak sell goods? Why, no! It certainly did not. There is no suasion whatever in the word Kodak. Where, then, did the suasion come in? For surely the Eastman company is not stupid enough to believe that its success has been due to the word Kodak. There was powerful suasion *behind* the word Kodak, or it never would have become the well known word it is today. What, then, was the suasion? The suasion was in this potent sentence which always followed the word Kodak:

"You press the button: We do the rest."

That's the secret of the Kodak success! You press the button, we do the rest, is one of the mightiest bits of suasion that has ever appeared in publicity. It was the most ingenious, most obvious, most powerful appeal to *buy* which human ingenuity could invent. The man who gave the Eastman

company that catch-phrase should be the company's president. He made amateur photography possible and he put the snap-shot camera on the map. You press the button, we do the rest, made amateur photography possible. The idea spread like a ripple, and if the company had used the word "Eastman" instead of Kodak, and had not trademarked anything — the you-press-the-button-we-do-the-rest idea would have sold the goods, just the same.

The general law which I have stated at the head of this chapter, while it is a law for trademarks, of course, does not apply especially to trademarks, any more than to any other publicity, whether trademarked or not. A modern trademark is nothing but a particular, individual, single advertisement, the exclusive right to use which is granted by law to certain person or persons, whether corporate or not; rather say, the use of which is forbidden to all others than those named in the bond.

But a statutory prohibition or grant, after all, is only an idea. The fact that a certain advertisement can be legally used only by certain chartered owners does not in any manner exempt the advertisement from any of the natural laws of publicity developed in this book. So that our law of association applies to trademarks simply because trademarks happen to be publicity. The fact that the trademarks are registered somewhere has little to

do with their selling power — nothing at all, in fact.

Trademarks, and the legal “defence” of trademarks, are unquestionably a source of enormous revenue for lawyers, but, like many other sources of income for lawyers, they are not much good for anything else. With the right kind of publicity, devised and uttered with all the elementary laws of advertising well in mind, trademarks would be quite unnecessary. If they exist at all, they exist for the same purpose which other and similar social follies exist — in order to make business for the courts. That business concern which uses publicity with its eyes open may have its main and permanent attention-getting device trademarked, if it wishes to, but if the publicity is *continuously played* and *continuously changed* in conformity with the natural working out of human social forces — the concern will never be called upon to “defend its rights” in court, or pay large fees to attorneys whose very existence is sucked out of human folly and lack of the power of self-preservation. Have a trademark if you wish, but do not believe that its cost per letter, or per lawyer, represents its selling power. The huge cost does, on the very contrary, mean the *lack* of natural selling power the trademark has. The higher the selling power the less the publicity costs. This is true not only of publicity in trademarks but publicity of every imaginable kind.

## Chapter XXI

### THE SELLING POWER OF MONOPOLY ADVERTISING

*The selling power of publicity for monopoly goods varies inversely with the degree in which the monopoly goods are a necessary of life and the number of its consumers.*

Let us consider first the first part of the above law, namely, that the selling power of publicity for monopoly goods varies *inversely* with the degree in which the goods are a necessary of life. Let us imagine, for example, that bread is absolutely owned by a monopoly — that all bread in a given market is owned and sold by one concern — the monopoly. Bread is perhaps one of the most absolute of the necessities. Man can live on bread indefinitely, and as bread is the cheapest of nourishing foods, it is necessary in the highest degree, and has been thus necessary from that ancient time when men discovered the art of agriculture.

Now our law tells us that in a market where bread were a monopoly goods, it is a waste of money to advertise it, because, being necessary in such a high degree, sales cannot be increased one jot by any imaginable amount of publicity. No matter how

widely bread is advertised the total demand for bread always remains the same. When bread is sold by a number of competitors in a market, publicity can increase the sales of some of the competitors, according as the suasion and the attention power of the publicity be high or low. Certain competitors can get more than their natural share of the total trade by efficient publicity. Publicity can switch demand from one competitor to another; but publicity cannot *increase the total demand*. No amount of persuasion, no amount of cheapness, no amount of supply, can lift the total demand for bread. The demand for bread is fixed by the limit of the consumption of bread. Nobody can be induced by any kind of method to increase his consumption of bread. Therefore, the absolute demand for bread is fixed, or constant.

Now if we imagine that bread is owned and sold by a monopoly, it is clear that the monopoly cannot sell *more than the natural demand calls for*, by using publicity of any kind to any degree whatsoever. If no amount of publicity can increase the natural total demand for bread, when bread is sold by a number of competing concerns, the same thing is just as true when the bread is sold by a monopoly. No amount of publicity can induce anybody to consume more bread than he would consume were there no publicity at all. Were bread a monopoly goods it would therefore illustrate the first part of

the law in a conspicuous manner. It would be perfectly useless for the monopoly to advertise its bread because the selling power of the publicity would be zero, inasmuch as bread is a necessary in the highest degree. The more necessary the goods the lower the selling power. The selling power varies *inversely* with the necessariness.

On the contrary, the less necessary the monopoly goods the higher will be the selling power. Coal oil, for example, is a necessary of life, and a monopoly. But it is not so necessary as bread, and its consumption is expansive, or extensible. One can use much of it, or little of it. The demand for coal oil — (assuming that there is no other means of illuminating — that all illumination is done by coal oil) — the demand for coal oil in these circumstances is *not*, as in the case of bread, a *fixed quantity*. Users of it can be *persuaded*, or induced, to use *more* of it than a given quantity. Publicity here would have a comparatively high productivity — were its suasion value high. If you could show the consumer of oil some good reason why he should use more of the product, if you could persuade him that it were to his interest to use more of it, you could sell more of it, and thus you could, by the right kind of publicity, increase the absolute demand for oil by forcing (persuading) the individual consumer to increase his normal demand. Here, as before, the selling power of publicity is found to vary *inversely*

with the degree in which the monopoly commodity is a necessary. Artificial light is a necessary; but it is not as high a necessary as bread. But the selling power varies *inversely* — the less necessary the monopoly goods the higher the selling power of publicity. Therefore the selling power of publicity for monopoly oil would be higher than its selling power for monopoly bread. In other words, the more necessary a commodity is the less variable will be the amount of the demand. Or,

*The variability of demand is inversely proportional to the degree in which the goods are a necessary.*

These laws will be found to have universal application. There are no exceptions to them. They apply to bread, or to oil, or to coal, or to the services of a railroad with a monopoly line, or to any other thing or service that is sold under a monopoly. Therefore a monopoly railroad can use publicity in an unlimited degree, because the use of the line is limited as a necessary. But this publicity would have for the railroad a value only for passenger traffic. It would not apply to freight transportation at all. With freight, the line is *absolutely* a necessary. Publicity could not induce the shipment of more freight, because the quantity of freight shipped does not vary; it is a fixed quantity. Advertising, in no matter what amount or no matter how devised, could not induce a single pound extra of freight shipment on a monopoly road. It could not move out a



single pound more of goods than the limit amount; and the limit amount *must* be moved, publicity or no publicity. But publicity could easily induce travel from persons who, without the suasion of publicity, would not travel at all. This potent law is at the bottom of the practical fact that a monopoly railroad never advertises its freight facilities. It would not *pay*. But a *wise* monopoly road would increase its business and its profits by the free use of publicity in cultivating travel for pleasure. And I believe that these policies are generally carried out by monopolies of this kind which are directed by sagacious and wide-awake officers.

So that we see, by this analysis, that monopoly goods and services are alike bound by precisely the same law of selling power. If the United States government would freely advertise its postal banks and its parcels post service, it would find that it would enormously increase the use of these utilities, because they are, in a way, a monopoly, or a direct and forceful *tendency* towards a monopoly — a fact well known to the private concerns that opposed their creation.

So much for the first part of our law. Now for the second part.

*The selling power of publicity varies inversely with the number of consumers of the monopoly goods specified.*

If the number of consumers of the monopoly goods

be large, the selling power of publicity will be correspondingly low. If the number of consumers be small, the selling power will be correspondingly high.

To illustrate this, let us go back again to bread and oil. Bread is used by everybody. Therefore the selling power of publicity for monopoly bread would be zero. Thus we see that the demand is nailed down to an unvarying quantity by *two* forces — that of the absolute necessity of bread, and by the fact that *all* individuals use it in the same unvarying quantity.

Either of these two forces alone would absolutely limit the selling power of publicity — and would do so because both are absolute regulators of the demand. When only a limited number can possibly use the goods, the total demand is fixed by the *number* of users. When all *must* use it, the total demand is fixed at a given quantity by the *consuming power* of the users.

We must, however, consider the working of the law when the two forces are left open to have free play — when necessariness and number are both elastic. Then it will be found that the selling power of publicity for monopoly goods rises and falls with the degree in which the monopoly goods are a necessary, and also with the number of individuals who consume them. It rises and falls as *both* of these factors enter into the computation, and the rise and fall will be *inversely* proportional to the sum of both.

If the monopoly goods are necessary in a comparatively high degree, and a comparatively large number of individuals use them, the selling power of publicity will be comparatively low; if the monopoly goods are necessary in a comparatively low degree and the number of consumers is comparatively small, the selling power of the publicity will be comparatively high.

Coal oil is less necessary than bread and the quantity consumed is elastic. It can be varied by the will of the buyer. Coal oil is used by a small number of consumers as compared with bread. Therefore, the selling power of publicity for monopoly coal oil will be considerable, when compared with publicity for monopoly bread, which would be zero. Oil is less necessary and the number of its users is smaller.

But do you not see how these laws will apply to every conceivable kind of product or service the sale of which is controlled by a monopoly?

I imagine that a close study of these facts would result in the using of publicity by various concerns that have a monopoly of their product. And I imagine, furthermore, that it would pay certain monopolies very generously if they would not only use publicity in space but would also use premiums, when premiums were adaptable to their goods. If instead of *selling* handsome lamps and stoves to consumers of oil in order to increase the consumption

of oil, the Standard Oil Company were to offer these articles as premiums, that company would be amazed at the quick quantity sales of oil they would make, and the enormous good will they would generate for themselves where they need good will the most — among the millions of ultimate consumers of their goods.

## Chapter XXII

### THE LAW OF CLEARANCE AND LIMITATION

*The selling power of publicity is limited by the selling power of all competing publicity in the same competitive field.*

In the previous chapters I have dealt with publicity and its selling power as if I were dealing with an absolute power. I have formulated the laws of publicity in a general way, as if the publicity were a thing in itself, the selling power of which varied so and so with the inherent quality of its attention power, its suasion power, and the elements entering into the composition of these things. But there has been an undercurrent in the argument which has often shown its head, but has been for the most part in the obscure background of our thoughts. The most important fact of publicity we can imagine is the fact that publicity is *publicity in competition with other publicity*; just as the business out of which publicity rises is *itself* a complete and far-reaching game of competition, in which the fittest alone survive. Let us now take a fixed look at the competitive character of publicity, and see what profit we can gather from a study of this important fact.

As we have already seen, there are two kinds of sales — sales of monopoly products, and sales of products in which competition of more or less high degree and widespread extension exists. Whether a monopoly can increase its sales by advertising depends altogether on the kinds of goods it sells, or rather upon the extent to which the monopoly goods are a necessary of life. The more necessary the monopoly goods are to all individuals in a community, the less productive will be the publicity; the less necessary the monopoly goods to all the individuals who can buy, the more productive the advertising. These facts I have more fully considered in the chapter on Monopoly Advertising.

But we have seen also that the very reverse is true when the necessities of life are not sold by a monopoly concern, but rather by numberless concerns who bid against one another in the sale, and whose interest it is to destroy one another, to kill one another, in order to secure as much of the trade as possible. Therefore, the end and aim of all competition in industry is *for some one individual to secure a monopoly of product*. Industry is surely headed for monopoly, and absolute monopoly at that; whether or not it will ever get there is no concern of ours; the monster with which *we* have to deal is not monopoly especially, but competition of the fiercest kind. We are all striving toward monopoly — we all want it (with ourselves as the sole monopolist) — but com-

petition is the hatchet we are using to kill one another with while we are on the way; and publicity—the advertising of our goods by one or another method—is the wheel at which the hatchet is ground.

What now is the effect of competition on the productivity of publicity, or the selling power of publicity, when numerous advertisers are offering their products in a market?

The answer to this question will probably come as a surprise to the reader. The effect of competition on publicity is absolutely mirrored in each and every one of the laws I have outlined in the foregoing chapters! Each one of these laws is operative *only* when competition in publicity exists. These mathematical laws of publicity developed in this book are in reality the mathematical laws by which *competition in publicity* is ruled. And there are no others. The formula set at the head of the present chapter is a super-law which is in itself a synopsis or synthesis of them all.

The net sales coming in from publicity of any one concern represents the selling power of that publicity after the total selling power of all the publicity in that same competitive field has been checked in, canceled and cleared against it.

What I mean is this: Suppose you are advertising shoes. The selling power of your publicity is negatived to a certain extent—clipped to a certain extent—by the selling power of the publicity of all

of your competitors. Therefore the volume due to your publicity is volume which comes to you after all your competitors have secured as much of the total as they can. Don't you see that all the laws developed in the preceding chapters are absolutely based on the working out of the forces of competition?— that the selling power of publicity, whenever that term is used in our foregoing laws (with the exception, of course, of that which specifically concerns monopoly), means always the selling power of *competitive* publicity? and that therefore these laws are of vital importance to every person whatsoever who uses publicity of any kind for any purpose of trade or service, and who would concentrate his fire, not waste it in useless and vain cannonading into the sky?

I have said that the selling power of monopoly advertising varies inversely with the degree to which the goods are a necessary of life. The more necessary the monopoly goods the lower the selling power, the less necessary the monopoly goods the higher is the selling power. But of the selling power of publicity in a *competitive* field the reverse is true. The more necessary the competing goods the *higher* is the selling power. But this selling power is clipped and reduced by the number of competing advertisements, the degree of their attention value and their suasion, the extent of the specific circulation, and all the other factors that enter into the operation of the complex laws of publicity examined heretofore.



## Chapter XXIII

### THE LAW OF BUYING UNITS AND SPECIFIC CIRCULATION

*The size of the buying unit of buyers determines the selling power of publicity according as the circulation of the medium is specific for large units or for small.*

Buying of all kinds is done by units. When a man buys one shirt, the unit of buying is one shirt. When he buys a dozen, the unit is a dozen. And when a hundred gross of shirts are bought at a time the unit of buying is one hundred gross. These units of buying are also units of selling. The larger the unit the quicker and more profitable is the trade.

This fundamental truth is recognized in the fact that industry everlastingly tends to become consolidated. The shipper who ships in units of train-loads is the customer whom the railroad seeks, and the desirability of large units in traffic has resulted in the absorption of many railroads by the shipper. The units of a certain shipper (say a coal shipper or an oil shipper) can grow to such huge proportions that the road is at the mercy of the shipper, and becomes a mere appanage of his business.

The unit system of buying and selling is at the bottom of all trade policies, and dominates industry

in every one of its details. It determines all the channels through which capital flows in the production and transportation of commodities. It reacts upon the more refined processes of industry known as finance and banking. It is recognized in the familiar trade terms, "volume of business" and "quick sales, small profits," the word "quick" in this case meaning no more or less than "quantity."

The unit system of buying and selling is the first great basis of price, the second being cost of production. Cost of production is itself dependent upon the *quantity* of raw material which the producer buys — except in cases where the producer owns the natural source of the raw material itself. The larger the unit of buying in which the manufacturer buys his raw material, the lower will be the cost of production, and hence the lower the market price of the finished commodity. The importance of the unit system in industry is therefore seen to be prime.

Now, all these facts have a highly forceful bearing on publicity, and mean much to the advertiser, although it is amazing how seldom they are considered at their right value by advertisers in the selection of their media. For it must be remembered that the *size of the buying unit of buyers determines the selling power of publicity according as the circulation of the medium is specific for high units or for low.*

If the medium is specific for high units — that is, if it circulates only or mainly to buyers who buy in

large quantities at a time (in large units) — its selling power will be accordingly high; and *vice versa*.

The intensity of the working of this law will be best appreciated when we consider that the main difference between wholesale and retail buying (aside from the fact that goods bought wholesale are bought to be sold again) consists mainly in the quantity — that is, in the size of the units — in which the buyer buys. Retail buying is done always in small units, and in the vast majority of commodities wholesale buying is done always in large units. Therefore, publicity which sells to ultimate consumers who buy at retail must have an enormously greater circulation than publicity which sells to those who buy in large, or wholesale, units — who buy for the needs or use of their business. The reader will see at once that this feature of circulation can be classified as *specific* — that is, the circulation of a medium that reaches buyers who buy in large units is specific circulation of the highest kind.

Now, the selling power of publicity varies with the specificity of the medium. If the specificity be high, the selling power will be high. If the specificity be low, the selling power will be low. A medium, therefore, may have a comparatively insignificant circulation and a comparatively enormous selling power; whereas another medium may have an enormous circulation and an insignificant selling power. It will all depend upon the specificity of

the circulation — whether the buyers to whom the medium circulates buy in large units or in small. Publicity that sells to *retail* buyers, who buy in the smallest of units, for individual consumption, for personal use, must have tremendous circulation. In that case the circulation must not only be specific for the special wants, needs, and buying power of the buyers, but it must take in enormous numbers of these. Whereas in publicity to wholesale buyers, the circulation, to possess the highest selling power, *must be practically limited to those who buy only in large units.*

Let us consider in detail how the argument applies to media that circulate only among wholesale buyers. Let us study how the law of specificity operates with the same deadly power in wholesale as in retail selling.

Let us take, for example, two media, one of which circulates only to 1,000 buyers who buy in carload lots, while the other circulates to 10,000 buyers of whom only ten buy in carload units, the units of the remainder being 1,000 pounds. In that case, one turn-over, in which all would make one purchase at their unit rate, would mean that the 1,000 buyers (reached by the 1,000 circulation) would buy 40,000,000 pounds (a car being supposed to have a 40,000-pound capacity), while the 10,000 buyers would buy only 10,390,000 pounds as a result of publicity in a circulation of 10,000!

Here we see that a medium which circulates only to 1,000 buyers sells nearly four times the amount of

goods that another medium sells with a circulation of 10,000, and this, too, when all the buyers whom the circulation reaches buy to their full capacity!

This is an amazing fact — especially when it is considered that the two media circulate in the same trade! Let it be dry goods, hardware, shoes, clothing, flour, or any other commodity, the rule is universal and rigid. It should be clear that an advertiser who was paying higher rates for the 10,000 circulation than for the 1,000 was getting the worst of the deal. Yet it is done every day.

What is the explanation of the mystery?

The answer is that advertisers do not study the units in which the circulation of their media buy. Advertisers believe that a large circulation will make large sales, when the truth is that large circulation can only make *numerous* sales, even when *everybody whom the circulation reaches is a buyer*. The advertiser pays the high rate, and prefers the high circulation, in the delusion that the rate and the circulation stand for *uniform units of buying*.

I realize full well that this analysis is not favorable to certain publications with enormous circulations, but I trust that I will not be taken as asserting that the owners of these publications are in any sense reprehensible. The large circulation argument has been used, and is being used, by absolutely honest publishers, and in the best of faith. But they have not analyzed the facts in the case. They, like their

advertisers, have not figured on the units of buying power which their circulation has.

My own publication, The Novelty News, owes its success to the very principle I have announced above. Our subscribers represent for the most part a comparatively small body of buyers, who seldom buy in anything but the largest units — many of them in carloads or other immense units. These buyers use vast quantities of general merchandise — not only novelties, specialties, souvenirs, post-cards, mail order and agents' supplies and other special articles, but general merchandise of many kinds used for premium purposes. It is merchandise which some thousands of buyers buy in enormous units, and if its circulation were 1,000,000 its rates, if raised in proportion, would be sheer robbery, when the transaction would be made with open eyes. Besides which, such a circulation would positively eat its own head off. We have consistently tried to *hold our circulation down* to buyers who buy in *large units only*. We have not been as successful in this effort as we would like. We have some circulation that we do not want. But we do not charge for it, nor figure on it. We are getting rid of it as fast as we can, and at times we have heartily wished that we never had it at all. We seek only the most specific circulation, of the highest units of buying power. It is a policy we have nailed to our mast-head, and our subscribers of the

*gilt-edge variety* have never complained that we have neglected their interests. On our books we have the names of many thousands of premium users, users of advertising specialties and buyers of scheme merchandise, mail order and agents' supplies, whose units of buying run down from train load lots to wholesale buyers of comparatively modest units, the total of which, however, is considerable. Let me quote a few examples of larger and smaller buying units, which the general advertiser may well keep in his mind as a type of the circulation to which *The Novelty News* has been limited by conscious effort.

Train loads of many kinds of staple merchandise have been and are being bought by Kirk, to be given away as premiums with his American Family soap. Kirk's greatest competitors — houses like Babbitt, Colgate, Proctor & Gamble, and others — are similar buyers. They buy in units of enormous size. They *must* do so. They are constantly looking for new kinds of merchandise to give as premiums. They are close readers of *The Novelty News*, and as it is the only magazine of its kind — the only magazine that makes a specialty of premium news, premium methods and media — the advertiser of general merchandise in its columns reaches a class of buyers to which no other magazine goes. Kirk, Babbitt, Colgate and other soap makers consult *The Novelty News* when about to buy general merchandise for their premiums.

A clock or lamp manufacturer, for example, who would like to sell his products in 50,000 lots in 90 days, by advertising in *The Novelty News* would reach big buyers like the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Record-Herald*, which in a single campaign of three months gave away 50,000 lamps and 50,000 clocks as premiums to increase their circulation. *The Novelty News* speaks directly to these buyers and hundreds just like them.

The American Tobacco Co. buys merchandise such as jewelry, silverware, cutlery, hardware, furniture, china, leather, fabrics, musical instruments, sporting goods, toys and other lines of general merchandise in quantities surpassing belief. This corporation has spent in a single year \$8,000,000 or more for these kinds of merchandise. The quantities (units) in which it buys are enormous, and the advertiser of these lines in *The Novelty News* speaks directly to the man who does this buying.

Multiply the above cases by some thousands of more or less large buyers, and you have a circulation of the most specific and powerful kind. The very same argument applies to other special or class journals with comparatively small but powerfully specific circulation.

Advertisers often want to know the *geographical* distribution of a medium in which they are asked to take space. This, in some cases, is an idle question. Geographical distribution has nothing to do with



selling power. It does not figure as a factor in publicity at all. If by "geographical distribution" the advertiser can *locate the largest and most profitable buyers*, why, then, the question is pertinent. If, for example, the advertiser could sell his goods only to a class of buyers in certain specific localities, well and good. But the advertiser who would overlook buyers who buy in carload lots, and who happen to be located only in the large cities of the Middle West and the East, and who would do so in order to talk to the whole country, including Idaho, California, and Nevada, would not be an advertiser who had studied the laws of specific media and circulation.

The Novelty News has subscribers like Wrigley, the chewing gum man, who buys post-cards in three-million lots; mail order houses like the Walkers and Larkin who buy general merchandise for premiums in carloads; and firms that buy, say, \$20,000 worth of fountain pens in two years to be given away as premiums! These are illustrations of the selling power of publicity of the highest specific kind, and have no bearing at all on the geographical distribution of the medium.

Again, The Novelty News is an illustrious example of the power of specific circulation in quantity buying, when we consider that in addition to its circulation to premium users, who buy general merchandise, it is the specific and only trade organ of novelties and advertising specialties of every kind. Mennen gave

a single order for 25,000 of the lithographed metal display brackets with a child's portrait, which you see in the windows of drug stores. The Patton Paint Company have used 12,000,000 lithographed tin savings banks, the orders running from 25,000 at a time and up. The International Harvester Company of America buys novelties and gift specialties in buying units of 100,000. They use millions of them. Houses that retail by mail order and others that supply agents and canvassers have smaller units of buying, but they buy in streams of these units.

I sincerely trust that my reader will not think I am trying to make a specious plea for The Novelty News. I would infinitely have preferred citing some other publication as an example; but the fact is that The Novelty News is a superb illustration of our law of specific circulation, inasmuch as it is a specific organ in which the seller of *general* goods can reach *specific* buyers; and it is probably one of a very few of that kind of organs in existence. It is a fact, furthermore, that we have had to educate sellers of general merchandise in this respect.

In conclusion let me say that my analysis of the selling power of publicity in the matter of the relation of units of buying to specific circulation should result in a re-ordering of much of the publicity which is placed by the general advertiser of general goods.

## Chapter XXIV

### HOW TO ADVERTISE: (I) THE CHARACTER OF THE GOODS

The prime necessity in the preparation and the use of all publicity is a clear understanding of the nature of the goods to be sold. All publicity must be devised and placed with the character of your goods in mind. All devices of publicity, whether the publicity be of the space kind, or specialties, or premiums, or all these together, must be subordinated and ruled by the peculiar character of the goods. First and above all the advertiser must *know the nature of the goods he sells*. Otherwise his publicity will probably be waste.

This is the secret at the bottom of so many failures in publicity. It is a commonplace thing to see magnificent advertising campaigns fall flat, even when the publicity was designed with scrupulous care. I do not now mean failures manifestly due to some glaring error in the publicity itself. I mean campaigns made with publicity as well designed as that which brought success in other campaigns. These failures have been mysteries, and many of them — perhaps all — have doubtless been due to the neglect of the advertiser to study the character

of his goods, and base his entire publicity policy upon the facts turned up by that study. Mistakes in designing and placing publicity, mistakes in the preference of the wrong medium, mistakes in other details of your publicity that seem absolutely hidden and undiscoverable, will probably be found in many cases to be traceable to the fact that the publicity was designed, or placed, or both, without due regard to the character of the goods.

How, then, should you study your goods? You will say it is nonsense to tell a man to study the goods he is making or selling. You will say that if he himself does not *know* his own goods, nobody knows them.

This is surely a short-sighted view of business. Of *course* you would know more about your own goods than anyone else in the world — in some ways. But do you know all about them when it comes to advertising them?

Before you utter one dollar's worth of publicity you must find out *in how far your goods are a necessary of life*, and in how far they put a *limit on their own consumption*. It is folly to use publicity without having carefully settled these facts in your mind. And it is worse than folly to allow some other person to persuade you into using publicity without having settled these facts to your own satisfaction.

Do your goods sell fast or slow? Are they used up rapidly by the consumer, and is there a quick, a

constant, and *recurrent* demand for them from the *same* consumer? If this is so, you are now faced with the crucial question, Do the goods put a natural limit on their own consumption? Can the consumer use much or little of the goods at will, granting that he has sufficient buying power? If yes, your publicity will be determined in one way. If no, it will be determined in another.

If you are selling goods that are a necessary of life, and if, at the same time, you are selling them in *competition* with others, well devised publicity will bring you ever increasing returns, according as the publicity is a persuader. If you were selling bread, for example, the selling power of your publicity would be high, because bread is a necessary. But bread is also self-limited in its consumption. All you could do with publicity would therefore be to get larger shares of the total demand. You could not hope to increase the demand of any one consumer. But if you were selling shoes, for example, your publicity would have a higher selling power, because your publicity could readily persuade the consumer of shoes to use two pairs instead of one.

For goods of the first kind, therefore, for goods the demand for which is self-limited by the self-limit of consumption, the selling power of publicity is limited by the total demand, and all the advertiser can do is persuade consumers to *prefer* his special brand. Extraordinary persuasion is indicated here. Mere space

publicity will not sell the goods as nimbly as space publicity *plus* premiums, or other powerful persuaders, because the question is simply one of *taking trade away from competitors*. If the number of competitors be few, space publicity soon puts them all on an equal footing, and more drastic measures are necessary. You must then *hold* your trade. You can hold it by price, by superior quality (which is the same thing in most cases), or by premiums, best of all, when premiums can be used on the goods.

On the other hand, if the demand, or consumption, be flexible, if the consumer can vary his consumption at will, the selling power of publicity, freed from this limitation, is higher. Here, too, the premium is of unlimited value, for its suasion is of the highest conceivable kind. A necessary goods, with a flexible consumption (and this kind of goods comprises the great mass of fast-selling commodities not used for foods), is the ideal goods to exploit by publicity in general, and by premiums particularly.

All the above logic applies only to goods sold in a *competitive* market. It does not apply to a monopoly market. If you have a monopoly of the goods you sell, the nature of the goods will be quite as powerful a factor in the selling power of your publicity as it is when you have competitors to fight. *And the huge importance of this little fact may make or break you.* Let me say at the start that I do *not* mean monopoly in the popular sense. In that sense, monopoly is

always understood to be a monopoly on utilities or goods that are *necessaries*. And right here our "law of the necessities" will determine the extent and the character of your publicity.

On the other hand, I do not mean by monopoly the exclusive right to the mere *name* of a brand of goods. I mean monopoly in the goods themselves. I mean monopoly which excludes, for any reason, all sales of a commodity, or of a utility of any kind, by any concern but one. For example, sewing machines are not a monopoly, but coal oil is, or at least it is virtually one. Bread is a monopoly when all but a bare fraction of the bread sold in a market is controlled by one concern. Matches are a monopoly. For many years granite ware was a monopoly. I do not know whether it is yet a monopoly or not. But it is indifferent. The seller of goods is the sole judge as to whether he is doing business as a monopoly or in competition.

If the goods are a monopoly, if the seller of the goods has no competition from similar goods of any kind, the selling power of his publicity will depend upon *the degree in which his goods are a necessary of life*. If they are an absolute necessary, such as matches for example, the seller will be throwing his money away if he uses it in publicity. Publicity cannot persuade any person under the sun to use more matches than his absolute necessities require. Nobody can increase or decrease his consumption of

matches at will. If the individual is a miser, and saves in the use of a match, no amount of persuasion can lure him into the freer use of matches. Matches are a necessary for all individuals; they are a goods that are self-limiting in their consumption; therefore, when sold under a monopoly it is a waste of money to advertise them.

*But* — if matches were sold by competing concerns — even though there were but two concerns involved — publicity would have a very high selling power for the advertiser; because publicity could persuade the buyer to *prefer* one brand over another.

Now all kinds of goods can be figured, in a way, as being necessities. The *degree* in which they are necessary determines how widely they are used. If they are highly necessary they will be used by larger numbers of consumers. And from the article we classify as a luxury — used only by a bare fraction of the community — down to matches and bread, that are used by everybody, there are intermediate degrees of necessariness all the way between.

Where, in this long gradation, do your own particular goods come in? If your goods are a kind in which high *quality* figures — in which there are degrees of quality on the market — you can be sure that your goods are necessary in a comparatively *low* degree. For as goods approach the *absolute* limit as necessities — say in bread and matches — quality figures less and less until it finally vanishes.



All bread, all matches, are the same in quality. One loaf of bread, one match, is just about as *good* as another. Here the taste and fancy of the buyer determine the sale. And these — in competitive goods — are powerful determinants of sales, and must be figured on in your publicity, as you will see.

But if your goods are not bound down by the law of self-limit in consumption, don't you see that you can *increase* the demand of any one buyer by persuasive and well *placed* publicity? If you are selling shoes, clothes, food products of certain kinds, or any one of a thousand other such things, don't you see that your publicity — when devised and placed with all our other laws clearly in mind — will act as a magic rod to tap the rock of trade, and this whether you sell under a monopoly or not?

That is what I mean when I say that the advertiser should *know* his goods before he buys a dollar's worth of publicity, whether it be in space, in specialties, or in premiums.

Carefully consider the matters I have touched upon above. You will see, I am convinced, that such a study of your goods is the *first* thing to be done, if you desire to get out of your publicity all the selling power that can be put into it. For you can be sure that you will get *out* of it just as much selling power as you put *into* it. No more, no less.

But in this careful study of your goods you will

only be laying the foundations of devising and issuing your publicity. When I tell you *how to advertise*, I am beginning at the beginning. The old proverb, "Well begun, half done," is true; but it assumes that the finish is up to the standard of the start. It is *easier* to finish a thing well begun than ill begun. If you are "in wrong" at the start, you have a terrible handicap. But I must ask you to follow me a few steps farther in the work, and to see how the application of our fifteen elementary laws of publicity will help you to clip your waste all along the line. Having answered the questions, Are my goods a necessary, and how far? Do my goods sell under competition or a monopoly?—you can take up the designing and the placing of your publicity with eyes wide open.

## Chapter XXV

### HOW TO ADVERTISE: (II) THE EIGHT TOOLS OF PUBLICITY

The fifteen elementary laws of advertising naturally condense themselves into eight complete methods, or tools, of preparing and placing publicity. Let us consider these eight tools in their logical order. The first is the character of the goods. This, being the fundamental consideration, I considered it in full in the previous chapter.

Granting that the advertiser has mastered a knowledge of the goods he sells, as outlined in the last chapter, let him concentrate his attention on the *making* of the publicity itself.

In spending his money for publicity, the business man should remember that his advertising is very apt to go wide of the mark, unless it is safeguarded in its preparation by the careful consideration of the laws of selling power developed in the foregoing chapters. I shall herewith supply him with the necessary rules for the intelligent devisement, or manufacture, of publicity to be used principally in space media, and in this term I include all sorts of printed matter, newspapers and journals of all kinds, circulars, letters, catalogs, and outdoor and

indoor signs. If his publicity is to have a high selling power, it must be devised with *all* these rules in mind. Each is all important. To neglect one is to lower the total selling power.

1. *Character of Goods.* (Treated in the preceding chapter.)

2. *Attention and Suasion.*

The advertisement should be of a kind that will attract the attention of the individual buyer. It should also contain some argument, or persuasion, to buy the goods. Special care should be taken *not* to make the attention-getting device "humorous" or "funny" unless you are advertising Mr. Dooley's tomfoolery, George Ade's side-splitting jokes, or somebody's roaring farce. Men like to laugh, but they are, after all, only one-tenth fool, and buying and selling are always serious matters, even when they are done by professional clowns or natural soft-heads. If you "amuse the public" in your publicity, you are doing so at your own expense. Do not let some feather-brained advertising writer play with your money, and pay him for doing so.

Let your attention-getting device be concerned with your house, or with your goods. If possible, let it partake of the persuasive character. If possible, let the attention device and the suasion device be identical. Remember the great success of the Eastman Company. It was the picture of a camera, with the legend, "You press the button:

We do the rest"—attention and suasion in one sentence, with the highest kind of *personal* appeal. Do not waste your money in attracting attention to *something other* than your goods.

If you are selling pickles, for example, let the attention-getting device of your advertisement be concerned with either your goods, your factory, or your firm. Let it attract attention to *pickles*, rather than to something that has nothing to do with pickles at all. Do not try to attract attention, for example, by the picture of a fond father spanking his boy, or the enormous picture of a man pointing dramatically at a small bottle of the goods. If you do so, you do not *attract* attention to your goods, you *distract* it from them. Millions have been wasted in that kind of publicity. You are not selling fond fathers or spanked boys. You are selling pickles. Attract attention to pickles, or to something concerned with pickles — and to nothing else. Let it be an *appetizing* device, if you will, either in word or picture. But let it lead naturally, by the law of association, to pickles.

If you make a big splurge to attract attention, and only succeed in attracting it *away from your goods*, the person whose attention has been attracted will think only of the other thing, or mainly about another thing, and your goods will go by the board. You must not attract attention to any thing, or any idea, other than your goods or yourself.

Your attention device may consist of one word, or of a whole sentence, or a thousand words of text. In the last case, there should be suasion running all through it from first to last. If the buyer is fertile soil his self-interest will prompt him to study the publicity, and he will be persuaded to buy.

### 3. *Specific Circulation.*

When I say you must attract attention, I do not mean general attention. The more general attention you attract, the lower the selling power of your publicity. It is not *general* circulation you are after: it is *specific* circulation — circulation among individuals who *buy* your goods. There is no such thing as a buying public. You could not sell Christian bibles to Mohammedans, or automobiles to the employees in a coal mine, however much you might attract their attention, or play up the *reasons* why the goods should be bought. Therefore the *character of your medium* is all important in the preparation of your publicity. Is the medium specific or general? Does it reach your buyers in high or low numbers? Is it a general medium, or a specific one? The selling power of your publicity (when it is rightly prepared) will depend on these factors.

Study the circulation of your medium, when that circulation is out of your control; for circulation, both in kind and number, is *in* your control when you are using the mails, or private means of circula-

tion in the matter of circulars, letters, catalogs, or other instruments of that kind.

Billboard publicity, for example, would doubtless sell a certain quantity of heavy machinery, but the selling cost would be ruinous. The *specific circulation* of billboards is too small for heavy machinery.

Thus you see that you have not only to study the quantity, or number, or radius, of your circulation, but the specificity of the medium and the circulation together.

#### 4. *Directness of Appeal.*

Your publicity must have directness of appeal to the individual who buys. It must connect the goods with the person who *wants* the goods, or in whom you can put a desire for *more* of the goods than he normally uses. This directness of appeal is, it should be clear to you, dependent on the *character* of your goods. / Are they a necessary? Are they self-limiting in their consumption? Are they sold in competition with other similar goods, or under a monopoly? Remember there is no such thing as a *buying public*. / Your appeal must not be directed to a public. It must be directed to *one individual*. It must be designed and framed as if there were but one individual in the whole world who uses your goods, and you were trying to persuade him. If you can sell the goods to that one individual, you can sell them to a million of him. /

### 5. *Repetition and Appeal.*

The selling power of publicity varies with the frequency of its repetition and the frequency of *change* in the form of the appeal. The same identical advertisement repeated again and again very soon loses force. When you see the same thing or hear the same thing day in and day out, you no longer pay the slightest *attention* to it. The stationary engineer can sleep soundly beside the roar of his machinery. Napoleon "slept amid the thundering of his guns." Continuous repetition of the *same* thing puts you to sleep. Surgeons, physicians, and nurses have no sympathy with suffering patients. They can laugh and jest over the deathbed, when the death *does not hurt their business*, or react on themselves professionally. When you pass by the same billboard advertisement day after day, or see the same advertisement day after day, month after month, in newspapers or magazines, you are no longer impressed by it in the least. It becomes a habit of mind.

Therefore an absolute necessity of successful publicity is change in the form of appeal.

### 6. *Association.*

Inseparably mixed up with the above law of repetition and appeal is the law of association. You must *repeat* your publicity as often as your resources will allow, but you must see to it that the repetition — while *changing its form* so as to prevent it from



becoming worthless and outworn — has in it an element that identifies it with all your former publicity. Hence the use of the recent styles in trade marks. The best means of forcing *recognition* is the use of some idea that always recurs in your publicity. Thus, for instance, the *idea* in "You press the button: We do the rest" was the fixed *idea* that always recurred in the Eastman Kodak Company's publicity. It was both the attention getter and the suasion. It was appeal and association together. But the company wisely varied their publicity with *fresh* appeals; and if they had used more variety, they had sold more cameras than they did. When the *idea* of "pressing the button and doing the rest" had become common to all cameras, its usefulness as an advertising device ceased. Other forms of appeal, other forms of persuasion had to be used, so that now the selling power of the Eastman publicity must be shifted to more *refined* appeals, because *new* appeals were used by competitors who sold their goods to persons who had been *educated* to camera using by the original publicity.

Therefore, discover and use an identification *idea*; not necessarily a trade mark; but an *idea*. Make this idea your own, and the moment you see others trying to imitate you, shift the form, and then their use of your original *idea* will react on them by serving to sell *your* goods, not theirs. The law of association will carry the individual into your own camp.

### 7. *Actual Determinants of Sales.*

Remember that the motives that activate the buyer — that make buyers active — *vary with the nature of the medium*. When goods are *generally* used, when goods are not bought to be sold again, the determinants of sales will be the attention and suasion value of your publicity as measured, or multiplied, by the necessities of the buyer (the necessariness of the goods), the price as related to the quality, and the taste and fancy of the buyer.

When goods are bought to be sold again, or when they are bought to be used as business tools by persons in business, or in professions (and goods of that kind are really sold again, directly or indirectly), sales are not only determined by all the general determinants as above outlined, but also by the *special* suitability of the goods to the needs of buyers. This is *specificity* of the medium. Barber's coats, for example, or surgical instruments, or any of the materials of trade, are sold, not only by the power of the publicity, the necessities of the buyers, the price and quality, and the taste and fancy, but also by the *specificity* of the medium as expressed in terms of the buyer's *special* wants.

### 8. *Variety in Media.*

The larger the *variety* of media used, the higher the selling power of publicity. This law is an outgrowth of the law of repetition and change of appeal.

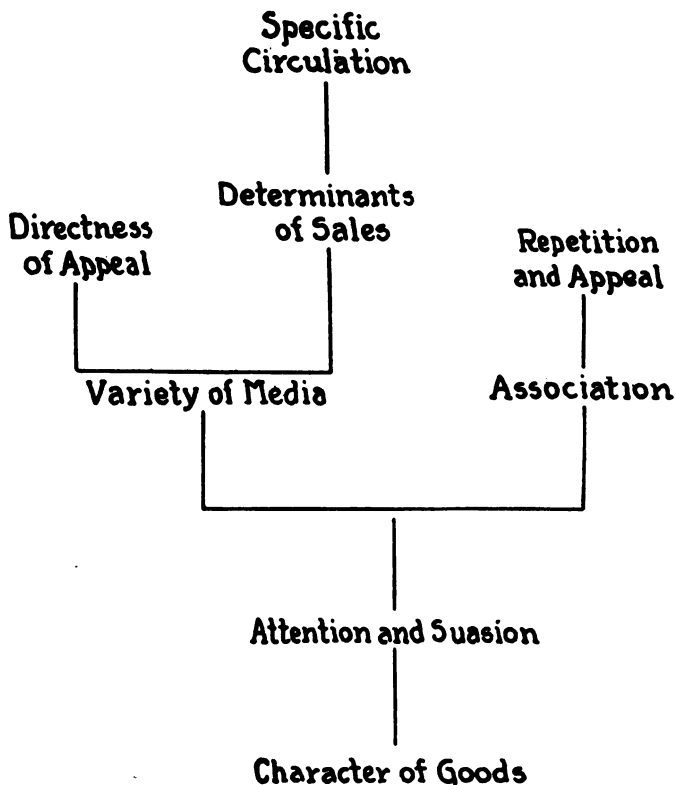
Do not make the mistake of putting all your publicity resources into *one* kind of medium. It is a physiological law that animals must have three kinds of food — starches, fats, and *leans* (or proteins). And the more highly these three general kinds of food are varied among themselves by using *different* kinds of starches, fats and leans, in constantly differing combinations, the healthier is the man.

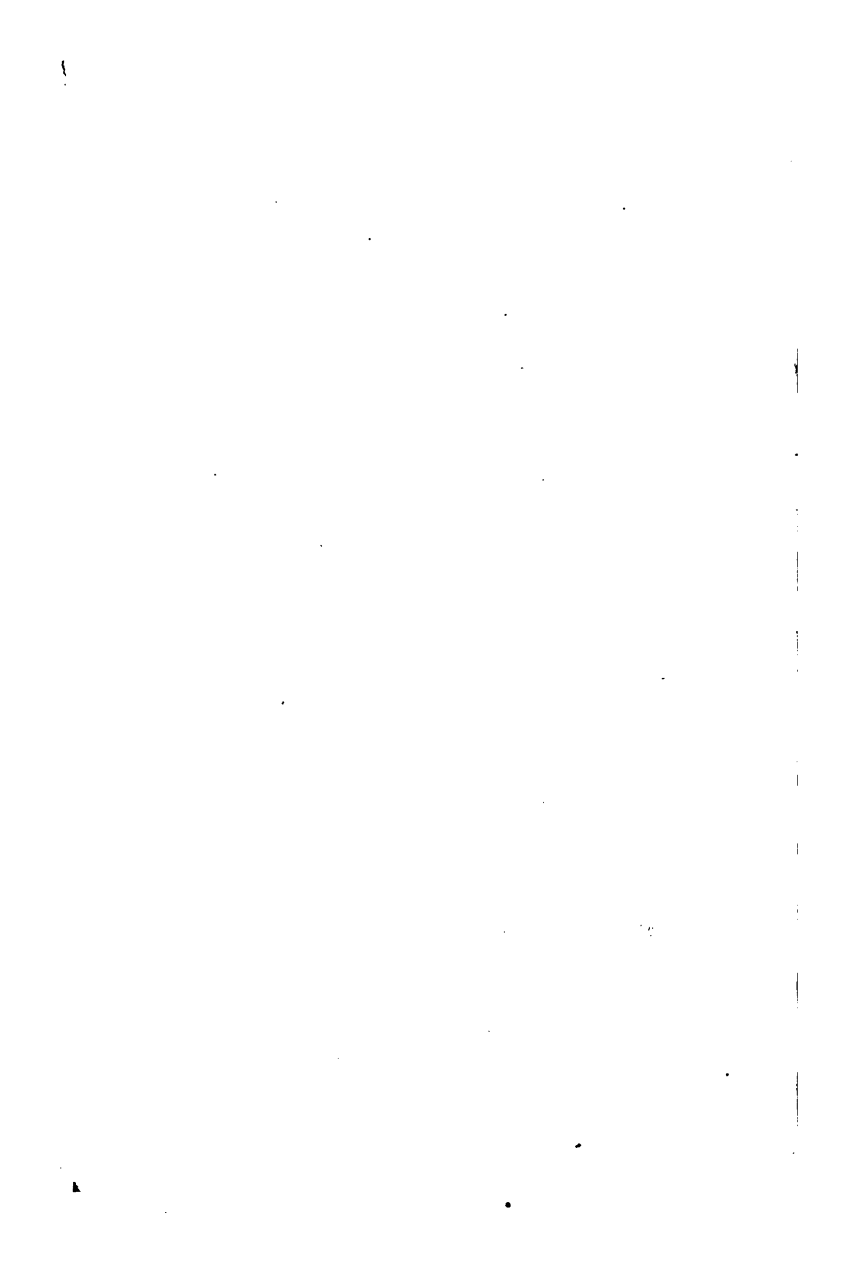
Now what is true of man's body is also true of man's mind — of his brain. Variety, change of occupation, change of scene, change from one kind of mental occupation or pleasure to another, or better yet, a *mixture* of many kinds, is the best mental food.

But you are dealing with man's mind when you are using publicity. You are appealing to the human mind. Give it a varied diet and it will respond. Therefore use as many different *kinds* of publicity, and as many different *kinds of media*, as you can. This principle has been found vastly productive by some of the largest and most successful advertisers in the world. The wonder is that so few large advertisers have been able to see the light in this respect. Vary the publicity and vary the media too. Rather use a judicious *mixture* of all. An appropriation equally divided among space, premiums and specialties will be incalculably more productive than the same sum put into any one of

the three. One experiment — only one — will prove the truth of this law to your entire satisfaction. Remember, too, that you must use as many different kinds of space media, as many different kinds of specialties and premiums as you can. For each of the three grand genera of media has many species and varieties of its own.

**THE EIGHT MAIN TOOLS OF PUBLICITY  
CONDENSED FROM THE 15 ELE-  
MENTARY LAWS**





## Chapter XXVI

### HOW TO ADVERTISE: (III) THE CONTROL OF RESULTS

Having prepared and placed your publicity, safeguarded by all the foregoing precautions, what should be the results?

The results will depend upon two things: (1) upon how you *maintain the publicity* with reference to time, and (2) upon whether you increase the quantity of it or not. These two factors, as you observe, are entirely within the control of the advertiser. Let us analyze these matters in detail.

If, with a given publicity, properly placed and kept at the same level of selling power according to the rules laid down in what has gone before, your advertising appropriation is neither increased nor diminished year after year, the results will be as follow: Your sales will increase until they reach an equilibrium with all the selling power your publicity has. They will increase until all the selling power has been *satisfied*. They will increase until all buyers are buying as much of your goods as the selling power can absorb. Having reached that equilibrium they will stay there as long as the publicity is maintained at the level represented by the annual appropriation.

If, now, your appropriation be *increased* year after year, or month after month, what will be the result in that case?

In that case the sales will increase until the *grand* equilibrium is reached. They will increase until all buyers in the market have been satisfied. They will increase until further increase in the appropriation *cannot* bring further increase in sales. And they will stay at that level as long as the volume of the publicity is kept at the maximum of selling power, or above it.

Such a grand equilibrium, however, calls for a national advertising activity that costs enormous sums of money, and spreads itself before the eyes of the people in every nook and cranny of the land. It is therefore known only to very rich concerns whose advertising has brought them heavy results; and even these results, there need be no doubt, could be still further swelled to a degree that would be surprising to these advertisers were all their publicity handled with our laws clearly in mind.

Finally, there is one other factor of selling power, which, unlike the two I have just examined, is not in the control, except indirectly, of the man who uses publicity. This factor is *clearance*.

Granted that your publicity is all it can be, granted that it has a maximum selling power, its selling power is clipped, canceled, and cleared by all the selling power of all the publicity of all the competi-



tors in your field. After you have done the best you can, your selling power, after all, is *net* selling power, and your results are *net* results. The grand net result of your publicity will be absolutely determined by just the degree in which your publicity has been ruled by the elementary laws of its selling power, defined and analyzed in the foregoing chapters but the two last, and condensed and applied in these. Our laws condense themselves into eight methods, or eight tools of advertising, and there are no others. When publicity has been prepared and placed according to these eight tools, it will have all the selling power that can be, by any conceivable plan, put into it.

The tools may be used with much skill or with little. But in the hands of the man who has them, they will be of gigantic power against the publicity of the man who has them not. Some men will be able to use them with vastly more skill than others; but their use in general will, I am convinced, have a beneficent effect upon the profits of advertisers, and a beneficent effect upon the cost of living for the consumer who buys the goods.

## Chapter XXVII

### CONTRIBUTORY FORCES

In addition to the principal elements that enter the composition of suasion — and these elements have been fully considered in the various chapters that have gone before — there are certain contributory forces that sway the effects of publicity — forces that tend artificially to swell the selling power of publicity, sometimes in astounding proportions.

Of these forces the main one differs from all the other elements of suasion in one special way. The elements of suasion thus far considered have been *individual* in character. I have all along insisted on the individual nature of the appeal of publicity to buyers. I have now to consider a force, not individual, but *social*. This force is *imitation*.

Imitation, in one form or another, is believed by a certain school of sociologists — led by the Belgian sociologist Tarde — to be at the bottom of all social movements. Whether Tarde's great generalization is true or not is a question that need not engage us here. It is true, however, that imitation, apparently, enters into the selling power of publicity in no uncertain way. And yet when it is analyzed, it will be seen that although individuals are prone to

buy certain kinds of goods just because they see others buying them, or because they believe that "everybody is buying" them, it by no means follows that the publicity itself, which started the movement of buying, is itself the *cause* of the imitation.

Publicity, no matter of what kind, can do no more than *initiate* the buying movement; after which, the innate tendency to imitation in men carries it on until it often reaches enormous proportions. These proportions, however, are not directly traceable to the power of publicity itself, unless it be that kind of publicity that informs buyers generally that "everybody is doing it."

The results of that kind of publicity, however, are not always what they are hoped to be. Were such the case, the problem would be an easy one. All that would be necessary would be simply to advertise extensively that "Everybody Buys Shoes at Smith's Store," or, "Everybody wears Higsbee's Hats" — and the trick would be done. But we know perfectly well that the trick is not done by any such simple procedure. Indeed, that style of publicity is not used except by advertising writers who have very little originality. Variations of the style are useful if they be not too blatant and insulting to the intelligence of buyers. And even then it is doubtful how far the "everybody is doing it" idea will swell sales. At the bottom of the "everybody is doing it" idea, there must be some

quality of the goods, or some social stimulant to imitation, that is not resident in the publicity itself. In which case publicity will *help along* the movement after the movement, by this extraneous power, is once set up. But the reader can see for himself that to use this "mass action," as it may be called, to sell goods, a complete monopoly of the goods is necessary. Mass action, or imitation, is seen at its best in the fashions in wearing apparel; and everybody knows that styles in dress are the most absolute monopoly that exist. All makers follow, or imitate, some one style, originated by some one originator, and everybody wears the styles because it is virtually impossible to buy any other fashion of apparel.

Mass action, or imitation, is therefore a contributory force in the selling power of publicity, but we must not impute directly to publicity itself the tremendous effects.

Another contributory force, not social but individual in its working, is curiosity. To arouse curiosity is, to a limited extent, a useful adjunct of gaining continued attention — when the curiosity is prompted by *some self-interest which will result in the buying of the goods*. If the arousing of the curiosity does not directly tend to prompt the possible buyers into actual buying — then to excite curiosity is to reduce the selling power of publicity. If the curiosity is stimulated by something other than the

goods you have to sell, the result will inevitably be just the opposite of that intended and hoped for, because as soon as the excited curiosity is satisfied the individual to whom the publicity is addressed loses interest in the publicity and the goods alike. In addition to all that, the goods are discredited in his eyes, as he feels that he has been tricked into a knowledge of them.

Another force contributory to the selling power of suasion is the conveyance of the idea that the goods are difficult, rather than easy, to obtain. This attraction is especially used in offers of premiums, and still another phase of it is found in publicity which incites to purchase by the intimation that the high price establishes exclusiveness of use. For example, I know a laundry which will not return clothes under a month, and widely advertises that it pursues this policy just in order to discourage the patronage of persons who are not rich enough to use vast quantities of clean linen! The idea is highly successful, and the laundry has the best of trade. Difficulty of attainment, however, is a special form of suasion that must be handled with consummate skill, else it will react disastrously.

Another contributory form of suasion is flattery to the self-conceit or judgment of buyers — a form used extensively by shrewd salesmen. This reminds us that publicity, after all, is salesmanship by means of printers' ink, *minus* personal magnetism

and ready answers to objections. It is therefore an infinitely more difficult art than personal salesmanship, and must be applied with every conceivable theoretical safeguard. The advertising writer who would succeed must imagine that his own imagination is talking to the imagination of his reader; and imagine, furthermore, all the effects of his legend upon that reader's own imagination, once it is set in play by the idea fixed in the dumb symbols of the publicity.

## *Chapter XXVIII*

### WHAT IS SUGGESTION?

In the foregoing chapters I have not used the word "suggestion," and it will be well perhaps to discuss the omission of the word, implying as it does the contention that suggestion is not a force or a factor in the selling power of publicity, and that therefore there is no need to mention it at all.

Now, it will be clear to my intelligent and discriminating reader that the word suasion, and the idea of suasion, carries in it the whole content of the idea of suggestion. I have dispensed with the use of the idea of suggestion, because upon analysis I find that the "suggestion theory" of advertising is a superficial one, altogether ungrounded upon scientific accuracy, and therefore not worthy the consideration of the practical business man, who is interested in getting results rather than in any theory of publicity. I do not desire, however, to lay myself open to the charge of willfully ignoring a theory upon which most of the advertising is done nowadays, by certain persons who pretend to be "experts," and who, in reality, are men quite ignorant of any kind of science or scientific methods.

When you, Mr. Business Man, desire to hire a

bookkeeper, or a financial man, for your business, you do not pick up the first fellow who applies for the job, quite regardless of his knowledge, training, or experience. If you hired such a man to run the financial end of your business, your business would go to the dogs. You know it would. And yet you turn over your advertising appropriation to some fellow, young or old, who has nothing more to recommend him as an "expert" than the fact that he runs an "advertising agency." I personally know advertising agents who drive a good trade, and whom I would not trust with 10 cents of my own money, so far as their training or natural ability would carry them in putting out my money on advertising schemes.

In these days everybody who has failed in everything else in which he has embarked, goes into "the advertising business." Unfortunately for the business man who patronizes him, he generally succeeds in that line, because the business man allows himself to be "gold-bricked" by a "line of talk" and a big display of "expert knowledge" where there is only ignorance and a desire to get rich quick.

Now, it is chiefly this kind of advertising agents who do the business of the country, and who direct the fortunes of trade. And it is this kind of "experts" who talk most loudly and insistently on the value of so-called "suggestion" in publicity.

The advocates of "suggestion" have merely



borrowed a word from science, and have used it as a rod to tap the rock from which flow so many refreshing and inexhaustible streams of gold.

What does the word "suggestion" mean? The word itself is derived from two Latin words which mean "under" and "to carry." To carry under. To suggest a thing, or an act, is to hint at it, to recommend it as a course of procedure. These are the ordinary definitions of the word.

But there is another meaning to the word suggestion, and it is with this special meaning in mind that the word is made use of by advertising agents. This is the sense in which the word has been used by hypnotists. And in this sense of the word, suggestion is not suggestion at all. It is a simple command, direct or indirect, and as an advertising device it is quite superfluous and useless; not only useless but hurtful, because, in a way, it is supremely ridiculous.

Mr. Harry Leon Wilson, editor of *Life*, one of the cleverest of American editors and writers, has admirably and scientifically handled the entire theory of suggestion publicity in his story of the millionaire Chicago packer, Mr. Higsbee. Higsbee called in a score of advertising fakers and ordered them to get him up a sign for his noted hams. Of course, the first sign flopped out of the box by the wise experts was, "Eat Higsbee's Hams!" This highly *suggestive* piece of advertising genius made the old gentleman roar with rage.

"*No!* Do you fellows think the American citizen is a damn fool? Eat 'em? What do you imagine people do with hams? Use 'em for wallpaper? By Heck, sirs, you are not going to make Higsbee's hams look foolish! Try again."

And finally Mr. Higsbee cashed up and sent the whole crowd of experts packing. He then turned to and wrote his own sign, which consisted of nothing but the bare words, "Higsbee's Hams."

Higsbee, or Mr. Wilson, rather, is right. It is foolish to tell the American citizen, or any other kind of a citizen, to *eat* Vienna bread, Jones' pies, or Brown's biscuits; to *sleep* on somebody's patent mattress; to *drink* somebody's grape juice or other beverage; to *wear* a certain make of drawers; to *wash* with somebody's soap, or to *smoke* a certain brand of cigars. As well *command* a man to breathe air, to walk on his feet, or to listen with his ears. To publish an advertisement of this kind is to confess the absolute stupidity of the man who made it, and the complete folly of the man who paid for it. Yet these are prime types of "suggestion" advertising — in the hypnotic sense.

The fact is that suggestion as used by hypnotists deals with men and women in a state of somnambulism. And the grand, primordial error made by superficial advertising promoters and commission-getters lies in the fact that the individuals to whom the advertising command is given are not hypnotized

or somnambulized by any means, and are not influenced one jot by the suggestion to do anything, let alone spending their money for certain goods just because an "ad" tells them to do so, unless it is made clear to them that it is to their interest or profit to do so, or because the bare knowledge conveyed by the advertisement that such a brand of goods exists makes it easy for them to ask for the goods when buying.

In short, what the advertising "experts" call "suggestion" is not suggestion at all. If suggestion (not the hypnotic, but the common kind) is used anywhere in publicity, it can be found in signs such as, "You'll *like* the Perfecto Cigar!" Here the individual is not *commanded* to smoke the Perfecto cigar; but it is *suggested* that if he *does* he will like it. But is not this *suggestion* merely a form of *suasion*? Is it not an attempt on the part of the advertiser to *persuade* the individual smoker, by an argument, to buy the goods? Likewise when the hypnotist gives his subject an onion and tells him it is an apple, or sticks a postage stamp on the back of the subject and tells her it is a blistering plaster, there is neither suggestion (in the common sense) nor command. There is a powerful difference, however, between the hystero-epileptic hypnotic subject and the ordinary person in full possession of his senses. You cannot *persuade* the average individual to gulp down an onion by simply telling him it is an apple.

Nor can you blister him with a postage stamp. And yet, so far as the suggestion theory goes, that is precisely what is attempted in all so-called suggestive publicity when it is designed on that ground. How many individuals have been actually persuaded to buy biscuits simply because the company has called them *Uneeda*? Not one, I venture. There is no *suasion* in Uneeda. Uneeda is a pretty catch word. But any other catch word would do just as well. Nor has Uneeda become a household word. It has simply lapsed into the *name* of a product; and in order to be struck by the word, one must see it in *printed* or painted form. Any other biscuit under any other name would have the same sale if backed by the same publicity. The idea of an "inner seal," which means airtight protection from dust, however, is *suasion* of the highest power. But it is not suggestion at all.

Suasion therefore takes the place of suggestion in all efficient publicity, and the less "suggestive" it is, the better. Suggestion, in its common meaning, never *works* unless the suggestion is a suggestion that has a *suasion value* — unless it is a suggestion that suggests that it is to the *interest* of the individual to buy the goods. Hypnotic suggestion need have no interest element in it at all. The subject does whatever the will of the hypnotist desires. But such is not the rule in business.

## Chapter XXIX

### LUXUS ADVERTISING

When advertising is not necessary for extending trade, when a concern is using all the productive publicity it can, when further publicity is unproductive of sales, when publicity is what I may call, to use a chemical term, *satisfied* — additional publicity is a luxury. This kind of advertising — and it is used, and satisfactorily used, in enormous quantities — I will call *luxus* advertising, the word being the same Latin root as the word luxury. Such a concern advertises on the same principle and for the same purpose that the Duke of Hamilton spends large sums in maintaining a lavish establishment — in spending his income with coldly calculated deliberation; or on the same principle that Mr. Carnegie disposes with a free hand his superfluous and redundant wealth. The advertising is a luxury — it is *luxus* advertising.

*Luxus* advertising is indulged in alike by large corporations and wealthy individual business men who, entirely satisfied with their prosperity, have the desire, natural in all large-minded, large-handed men of affairs, to let the world know that they are alive and still in close contact with a fairly important

fraction of the earth's population. Luxus advertising is the pomp of business success and of commercial sway. The successful business man wishes the world to *know* of his success, and advertising on a large scale is the only way he can do it — unless he be a Morgan or a Rockefeller, who have their own peculiar methods of advertising, impossible, however, to the successful business man of much lower rank.

When you are a really magnificent success in a comparatively small way, and you cannot afford to play the royal philanthropist, and yet feel that the world should know and appreciate your worth and ability, there is no means of acquainting the world with the facts better than the right kind of luxus advertising. While you are in the process of *building*, do not waste a penny in that line of talk. Put it all in publicity that pulls. But when the pulling power of publicity reaches its limit, scatter a few hundreds of thousands in the luxuries of publicity, and you will find therein a satisfaction to be derived from no other indulgence whatsoever. In reality, luxus advertising is the substantial remembrance of the old friend who helped us out when we needed it, and it serves the double function of repaying, or being grateful for, assistance, and at the same time letting the people know that we don't care a snap for expense.

It was on this principle that the Bank of England used to feed its clerks (in full view of the public) on

champagne and chicken lunches during business hours. True, the clerks did not over-indulge themselves — at least in champagne — but the solid, thickset, beef-loving British workingman was thereby satisfied that the Bank of England was another Rock of Gibraltar in solidity and permanence. It must have been so — when its clerks could be fed on that kind of diet daily! — *Luxus* advertising.

Very often the publicity used by a large monopoly corporation is nothing but *luxus* advertising. This form of publicity has been used, and is now being used, by numerous large individual manufacturers and distributors, whose national productive publicity is constantly maintained at its highest level. And these very gentlemen would be the first to resent the advice that they were wasting their money.

*Luxus* advertising, however, is not possible to any concern or to any individual whose appropriations are not large enough to maintain the level of publicity which marks the limit of selling power. It is permitted only to the business man who has ceased to grow.





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